

Tracing the Cold War in Colombian architecture: a disregarded legacy

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I, María del Pilar Sánchez-Beltrán, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

Drawing on a social and cultural analysis of the architecture designed and built by the state during the Colombian military dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-1957), and based on original sources, including historical archives, declassified official reports, oral history, and raw blueprints, this PhD research project traces relationships between architecture, and the national and international politics of that time. In doing so, this research analyses the relation between the built environment and power, questioning concepts of representation and identity. It will be argued that as well as a materialization of the nationalist discourse, the nationwide consolidation of modern architecture should also be seen as a camouflaged instrument of the Cold War.

As part of the contemporary debate about the worldwide impact of the Cold War, this research focuses on the architecture of the “National Plan of Public Works” developed during Colombian dictatorship of the 1950s. It takes as a case study one of the regime’s most emblematic projects: the Naval College *Almirante Padilla*, using it as a methodological instrument through which larger issues can be traced: the architecture is taken to be a materialization of the political project of a “new state” in Latin America, according to the policies implemented across the hemisphere during the Cold War. State architecture was explicitly used as a political device of the aspiring “welfare state” amidst a social and governmental controversial context.

This state architecture co-opted the Modern Movement, simultaneously developing modern facilities, and following other national and international agendas. But unlike other well-known examples, this was not an attempt to create a unified national identity, or to showcase Rojas regime. Conversely, the built environment produced by the dictatorship used common strategies of the Cold War; it embodied a “double truth” of welfare and warfare. The legacy of this government has been almost totally overlooked. By interrogating tactics in use at the time these projects were created, what will be articulated here is a critical view of this seemingly neutral infrastructure by questioning how this shaped what I will refer to as a conflictual identity.

MIEDO Y CORAJE

El miedo y el coraje
son gajes del oficio
pero si se descuidan
los derrota el olvido

el miedo se detiene
a un palmo del abismo
y el coraje no sabe
qué hacer con el peligro

el miedo no se atreve
a atravesar el río
y el coraje rechaza
el mar del infinito

no obstante hay ocasiones
que se abren de improviso
y allí miedo y coraje
son frajes de lo mismo

Mario Benedetti's unpublished
poem *Fear and courage* [c.2002]

To Vita and Nicita,
for the example of believing in their dreams
and the bravery to pursue them.

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List of Abbreviations

ANAPO *Alianza Nacional Popular* [National Popular Alliance]

CAN *Centro Administrativo Nacional* [National Administrative Centre]

CAO *Centro Administrativo Oficial* [Official Administrative Centre]

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CINVA *Centro Interamericano de Vivienda* [Inter American Housing Centre]

CUA Catholic University of America

DANE *Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística* [National Statistics Department]

DIPE *Dirección de Información y Propaganda del Estado* [Directorate of information and propaganda]

ENAP *Escuela Naval Almirante Padilla* [Naval College]

IAA Inter-American Agency

IBDR International Bank for Development and Reconstruction

ICA International Cooperation Agency

ICT *Instituto de Crédito Territorial* [Housing State Fund]

MoMA Museum of Modern Art

MOP *Ministerio de Obras Públicas* [Public Works Ministry]

NPPW National Plan of Public Works

O&V *Obregón & Valenzuela* [architectural practice]

PSYOP Psychological Operations

SENA *Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje* [National Vocational Education Service]

SENDAS *Servicio Nacional de Asistencia Social* [National Social Assistance Service]

SOM Skidmore Owings & Merrill

US Related to the United States

USIA US Information Agency

USOM US Operation Mission

VOA Voice of America

List of Archives

APRAA	<i>Asociación Pro Rescate de Archivos de Arquitectura</i>
AHC	<i>Academia de Historia de Cartagena</i>
AHN	<i>Academia de Historia Naval</i>
AAL	Architectural Association Library
AAA	Architectural Avery Archives at Columbia University
AB	<i>Archivo de Bogotá</i>
AGN	<i>Archivo General de la Nación</i>
AHC	<i>Archivo Histórico de Cartagena</i>
AH-UNC	<i>Archivo Histórico Universidad Nacional de Colombia</i>
BL-UCL	Bartlett library
BBCC	<i>Biblioteca Bartolomé Calvo Cartagena</i>
BLAA	<i>Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango</i>
BNC	<i>Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia</i>
BL	British Library
CCC	<i>Cámara de Comercio de Cartagena</i>
CUA	Catholic University of America, archive
GT	Private collection <i>Germán Téllez</i>
ROH	Private collection <i>Rafael Obregón Herrera</i>
HV	Private collection <i>Hernán Vieco</i>
ENAP	<i>Escuela Naval Almirante Padilla</i>
FHC	<i>Fototeca histórica de Cartagena</i>
FPF	<i>Fundación patrimonio filmico</i>

FLC Fondation Le Corbusier

IPB *Instituto de Patrimonio Bogotá*

IGAC *Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi*

LOC Library of Congress

MINVIAS *Ministerio de Vías y Transporte*

MALR-UNC *Museo de Arquitectura Leopoldo Rother Universidad Nacional de Colombia*

MB *Museo de Bogotá*

MNC *Museo Nacional de Colombia*

MN *Museo Naval*

MoMA Museum of Modern Art, New York

NARA National Archives Administration Records, US

NAUK National Archives UK

NYPL New York Public Library

PUJ *Pontificia Universidad Javeriana*

RAC Rockefeller Archive Centre

RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects

SHL Senate House Library

SCA *Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos*

SCI *Sociedad Colombiana de Ingenieros*

TU Texas University – Austin, Library

UJTL *Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano – Caribe,*

UNC *Universidad Nacional de Colombia*

UTC *Universidad Tecnológica de Cartagena*

Introduction

In Colombia, at the end of 1954, the military government of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-1957) organized an exhibition at the *Museo Nacional de Colombia* (National Museum of Colombia), presenting to the community its “National Plan of Public Works”. The model of a new Naval College of Colombia *Escuela Naval Almirante Padilla* was the opening feature of the exhibition. Indeed, it was on the front page of the catalogue and the image selected to report the exhibition in the media. The Naval College was thus portrayed as the representative project of the military government’s plan for and policy of infrastructure.

Tellingly, this architectural complex, located in Cartagena, was the only state project of the military government with an special issue of *Proa*, (Martínez 1955) one of the most influential journals of architecture in Latin America during the mid-twentieth century. The architectural journal was clearly identified with the postulates of the Modern Movement, but also selected and validated projects considered as having “exceptional qualities” under these postulates. This architectural complex was the stark exception to what can be understood as a “policy of silence” of the journal about the regime’s projects.

Figure 1. ENAP general plan: prized state project during the regime, published in 1955 © Proa 91

However, two oddities soon arise: first, there is no information about this project in the reports of the Ministry of Public Works of those years. Secondly, there is no mention of the Naval College in subsequent architectural history in Colombia. Indeed, in my studies of architecture, there were minimal allusions to the architecture built in the country in the mid-twentieth century, despite the fact that this state infrastructure is still in use. The vast number of modern projects developed within this short period of time has been totally overlooked as architectural objects of interest.

Disregarded legacy

Looking in detail at the urbanisation process in Colombia, the years of the Rojas dictatorship stands out as a time when the adoption of modern architecture was accelerated nationwide. Amidst probably the most difficult turmoil in the country's history, the regime concocted a "National Plan of Public Works". (Piedrahita 1955) This Plan was the most visible policy of that government and the centre of its promotional image as what was arguably portrayed as a "welfare-state". However, such idea of a welfare-state has important differences with how it is conceived in Europe. As it has been discussed by Gosta Esping-Andersen (1990) the social and economic policies that configure the orientation and structure of the state, have a multifaceted character. I will follow here Evelyn Huber et al. (1995)'s reference to this practice in Latin American countries as it was nominally pursuing a paternalistic action of the state.

The National Plan of Public Works was an ambitious programme to provide the rural and urban areas with infrastructure. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) It was an important plan of connectivity, linking the most remote areas, with an extensive plan of roads, air routes, and railroads. Most of its visibility was concentrated in civil engineering works. Nevertheless, it was also an architectural plan. In terms of architectural infrastructure, there was considerable investment in educational, social, health, sanitary, civic, transportation, cultural, and even housing projects. Official reports mention hundreds of buildings planned, and supposedly funded, by the state in different regions of the country. These buildings followed an image of modern architecture, had dispersed locations, and represented the country's progress. For Rojas dictatorship, the policy of Public Works acted as a catalyst for the consolidation at a national level of the Modern Movement. However, these projects have been left out of the history of architecture in Colombia. They are a disregarded legacy. Therefore, this research asks: what was the rationale behind the generation of what appear at first glance to be arbitrary projects? And how can the historical consequences of these projects be understood?

Figure 2. Naval College designed by Obregon & Valenzuela, 1955-1961: representative project of modern architecture promoted by the state © ENAP

Current architectural history debates provide a source of reference. The relationship between architecture and power has been a subject of interest which scholars have amply discussed vis-a-vis other regions.¹ The particular influence of the Cold War period on architecture has rapidly grown as a subject for discussion in the last decade.² However, it is an almost unexplored subject in Latin America.³ In this sense, there is an opportunity to bring this subject matter to the region and to relate it to one of the less considered periods in Latin American architectural studies. To date, these uncomfortable questions have been avoided, generating elisions in the architectural history of an important part of the twentieth century. This project challenges established views, and aims to contribute to the cultural history of Latin American architecture, breaking this silence in three main ways: filling the gap in the study of modernity in different Latin American countries; challenging the current canon of study of modern architecture in Colombia; and addressing its relation with the national and international politics of the 1950s.

Canonical studies of Architectural History in Colombia

Scholarly literature has noted outstanding developments of modern architecture in Brazil and México; the most inclusive studies also consider Cuba and Venezuela. Such is the case with Carlos Brillembourg (2004), Valerie Fraser (2000), Damian Bayón et al. (1979), Francisco Bullrich (1969), Paul Damaz (1963), and Henry Russell Hitchcock (1955). However, little is known about other countries, such as Colombia, that developed differently, despite the fact that in 1955, in the opinion of Henry Russell Hitchcock, the country had “a promising advance”. When asked about the quality of the constructions he answers: “The best quality is the Colombian.” Later he comments regarding the countries that play a determinant role for the modern movement: “Brazil has still a directing role, both in quantity as in the visual interest of its solutions.

¹ Relevant works of reference are: (Bleecker 1981); (Lane et al. 1978; Lane 1985); (Weizman 2008; Holston 1989; Dovey 1999); (Hirst 2005); (Adam 2012)

² Influential references are: (Rusi 1991), (Dezalay et al. 1996), (Appy 2000), (Cocroft et al. 2003), (Fraser et al. 2007), (Crowley et al. 2008), (Castillo 2010),

³ Simultaneous with this research, other projects have emerged, filling a considerable gap in the regional modern architectural history in its political context. Some references are: (Andreoli et al. 2007), (del Real 2012), (del Real et al. 2013) Previous works address a wider spectrum than architecture itself: (Andermann et al. 2005), (Giunta 2005).

Colombia, and lately Venezuela do also have a lot to offer in these last years.” (“Entrevista a Henry Russell-Hitchcock sobre arquitectura moderna latinoamericana” 1955)

Notably, in the preparation for his pioneering survey of Latin American architecture, Henry-Russell Hitchcock commented in a letter to Paul Rudolph on June 23, 1954, how difficult the challenge was:

I am shocked that Harvard library has such a poor coverage. I have been through the files of two Argentine magazines and one Cuban one with little edification to date, but of course I was already aware that Mexico, Brazil, and after them Colombia and Venezuela have the best stuff. The Mexican and Brazilian magazines are at Yale, and I shall be going through them shortly. So far, I have been unable to locate any Colombian or Venezuelan magazines. (Hitchcock 1954c)

Neither modernity, nor Latin America, are monolithic phenomena. The Latin Americanist Alan McPherson (2003) reports that during the twentieth century in the region there were simultaneous trends, ranging from a radical “developmentalism” that followed the new living standards, to “indigenism” – movements that opposed the modern image. So far, little is known about what happened in Colombian architecture during the Cold War.

Unfortunately, the literature on architectural history of Colombia does not have a long tradition. There are few references before the 1980s, and since that time an important generation of national architects has researched and established a canon: what is considered worthy in terms of the history of architecture. These books constitute the foundation of education in architecture in Colombian universities, and have also permeated foreign views about the country’s achievements. The most well-known authors of architectural histories are Silvia Arango (1989), Alberto Saldarriaga Roa (1986), and Germán Téllez Castañeda (1977).

Traditionally, architectural history in most Latin American countries, including Colombia, has identified historical periods that are “worthy” of study, because they are considered to constitute its identity.⁴ Such is the case of Colonial architecture, which was a Spanish legacy, or the case of the eclectic architecture that celebrated the young Republican country adopting different influences, including neoclassical elements.⁵ Nevertheless, it is curious that these previous architectures were considered part of the national identity regardless of their association with foreign influences, while such foreign relations have been taken as an argument for excluding modern architecture.

The history of modern architecture written in Latin America after the 1980s,⁶ as the scholar Felipe Hernandez (2002) has argued, has been articulated according to a tradition that focuses on studying the form and function of isolated objects: in particular, objects built by a group of selected individuals that by then were identified as canons of the “appropriate modernity”. Such denomination in turn builds on Kenneth Frampton’s conception of “synthetic regional modernism”. (1980) That is, this so-called peripheral development of the original (US or European) modern architecture. Assuming as secondary architecture that which was produced elsewhere, case in point, in Latin America, where significance was given only to what followed organic forms, or was

⁴ I would suggest that there is a common ground in traditional architectural history of Colombia: its authors make few references to Pre-Hispanic architecture. They focus on colonial architecture and urbanism imposed by the Spaniards since the sixteenth century to early nineteenth century. After independence in the nineteenth century, they present the changes of the so-called “republican architecture”. On the first two decades of the twentieth century, this literature presents what is usually known as the “architecture of transition” as a desperate search for new references. Moving then in the 1930s and 1940s to a sort of “pre-modernity” imported by a group of foreign architects – whether they participated as external consultants, or indeed, immigrated to Colombia –, which were common phenomena in other countries in South America.

⁵ The tradition in Colombia has been to give an architectural language the same name as the political period. In this case, Republican corresponds to the period after independence from the Spanish Empire, i.e. the nineteenth century, and extending to the beginning of the twentieth century. However, it would be more accurate to name it eclecticism, as it corresponds to the confluence of diverse non-Spanish European expressions.

⁶ Indeed, some of these research works focusing on the 1970s, highlighting the so-called “brick architecture”, were initially developed in British schools of architecture during the 1980s. Lorenzo Fonseca, Carlos Niño, Alberto Saldarriaga, were educated either at the Bartlett School of Architecture, or at the Architectural Association. This scholarly literature expands on the brick architecture of the 1970s, claiming this to be what Christian Fernandez Cox called “appropriate modernity”. i.e. the amalgamation of modern spaces incorporating traditional materials or features. By placing special emphasis on the work of individual architects, such as Rogelio Salmona, Guillermo Bermudez, and Fernando Martínez Sanabria; all of them with examples of what was termed in Colombia as “brick architecture”, and which was mainly built in Bogotá.

built of brick. However, the idea that some periods were more “appropriate” than others generates certain questions.

Such a posture has undervalued this alternative modern architecture, questioning its historical validity. Consequently, the issue of what happened in architecture from the 1940s to the 1970s has been excluded from the canon, presenting a clear gap in the literature of architectural history. This gap becomes more surprising when we realize that it was precisely during these decades Latin American countries, and particularly Colombia, experienced a sharp and accelerated urbanization process. Colombian cities were for the most part built up in these decades yet they remain the least examined in terms of architectural scholarship.

• **Unquestioned modern architecture**

In Colombia, as in other countries in the region, the move to modernism was a long process, the initial developments of which can be traced back to the 1930s, or even slightly earlier, and to specific social, economic, and political changes.⁷ Modernism implied a transformation in the image of rapidly growing cities, and the awareness of a diverse and fragmented country. However, the instability and complexities of the transformations that occurred during the twentieth century made solving emerging issues a priority rather than understanding what was already there.

Moreover, the traditional primacy of two elements, Bogotá and housing, has long determined what is registered in architectural history. On the one hand, Bogotá as a capital city with a major concentration of power, has not only had the most active research centres but also the resources and sources to pursue these studies. And, on the other hand, the permanent shortage of housing in main cities, that has barely responded to a rapidly growing and vulnerable population of mainly rural migrants. My aim is to contribute to the knowledge of modernist architecture at the time, type and place where there is the largest scholarly gap. That is to say that I will focus on the four

⁷ The political context of the country will be discussed in Chapter 1. Despite the bipartisan practice prevalent during the twentieth century, between liberals and conservatives, their politics are traditionalist and guided by a close relation with the Catholic church.

years of the regime, on state architecture, and on projects others but housing outside of Bogotá.

Regarding studies of the civil architecture developed by the state, there are few published references available. An important exception is the architectural historian Carlos Niño Murcia (1991). Niño, who personally recovered the archives of the Ministry of Public Works (they were being stored in an abattoir), has identified the Ministry as a dominant actor in the promotion of modern architecture.⁸ Niño demonstrates that this Ministry was a laboratory of experimentation and research on architecture and construction technologies and that, for more than 60 years, this government agency was the most active promoter of designs and works nationwide. However, he makes few references to the Ministry of Public Works projects during the period of the dictatorship. It is the aim of this thesis to illuminate the paradigmatic changes to architecture at this time.

Also of interest is the Master's dissertation by architect Doris García de Moncada (2004) about architecture built in Bogotá during the government of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. This study betrays an evident proclivity in favour of the General, and even avoids referring to the regime as a dictatorship. The work inventories projects built in the capital city, dedicating an important section to housing development during a much more extended period than that covered by Rojas government and plans. Interestingly, without identifying their specific participation in individual projects, this dissertation introduces references to a number of American architectural and engineering firms that worked with the military government, such as: Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM); Knappen, Tippetts, Abbott & McCarthy (later known as TAMS); Morrison-Knudsen; Holabird, Root & Burgee, among others.

• Historiography

⁸ Carlos Niño's research comprises a comprehensive inventory of state architecture from 1905 to 1960, planned and built up by the Direction of National Buildings, unfortunately with fewer references towards the last decades of study.

Accurate references about the production of built environment during the dictatorship are lacking. A large amount of the political and economic histories of the period focuses its attention on corruption. Most references adopt a critical position about the excesses of the government.⁹ Other references defend Rojas on account of the popular support he enjoyed.¹⁰ Critics usually came from the circles of power, or the groups affected by the drastic measures or the excesses of the government, i.e. traditional politicians, industrialists, scholars, students, journalists, and the clergy. The masses, on the other hand, maintained their support for the General as he claimed to embody their concerns, providing them with the social services of the aspiring welfare state. In informal conversations about the regime, when talking about this research, it is evident that certain buildings remain connected to Rojas, as well as recollections of the corruption, and the abuses of power, and the cruelty towards those known for their discontent. The accounts that favour the military government rely on its populism¹¹ and refer to the extensive number of projects of the National Plan of Public Works.

The National Plan of Public Works, however, is barely mentioned in architectural history¹² and even now there is a certain resistance to the topic. When I have discussed the period, either with the people involved, or with those who have written history of the time, there is a degree of denial, and most memories and references turn either into a defence or a denunciation of the acts of the government. Although he argues “it is not a denial but a lack of elements to do methodical research”, Téllez stresses that after experiencing the Rojas regime:

This is inevitable; there is no middle ground on this theme. Try to understand that buildings of the regime were regarded as having a primordial political significance or, on the other hand, as useful public tools, the origins of which no one cared or knew about. Few remember [now] exactly what hospitals,

⁹ Cf (Rojas de Moreno 2000), (Lasso Vega 2005) Cf (Urán Rojas 1983), (Lasso Vega 2005)

¹⁰ Cf (Urán Rojas 1983), (Valencia et al. 1970) Cf (Valencia et al. 1970), (Rojas de Moreno 2000)

¹¹ Although acknowledging the populist tendencies, the economic historian Lopez discusses the identification of Rojas Pinilla's government as populist based on economic scholarship. (Lopez Sanchez 2006)

¹² Case in point, the absence of most works of the decade is recurrent in most of the scholarly canon. Cf (Silvia Arango 1989), Case in point, the absence of most works of the decade is recurrent in most of the scholarly canon. Cf (Silvia Arango 1989), (Saldarriaga Roa 1988), (Niño Murcia 1991) (Corradine Angulo et al. 2001), (Corradine Angulo et al. 2001),

waterworks, roads, bridges or housing projects were built during the dictatorship and do not care whether they were put up by other governments. (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

In an interview about the specific research conducted into the architectural projects of the Ministry of Public Works from 1905 to 1960, the scholar Carlos Nino Murcia has pointed out that this absence is also related to the scarcity of material available in the Ministry archives. (Niño Murcia 2011) Indeed, the Ministry used to preserve a detailed record of their activities, but the information from the period of the dictatorship is either disorganized or non-existent. Nevertheless, this argument alone does not explain the silence, as in Colombia there was no extensive tradition of record-keeping until the 1990s, and canonical scholars have done extraordinary work in recovering an account of the national architecture in other periods based on fragments of information. One wonders, therefore, if there may be other reasons for this omission. In Colombia the architecture produced between the 1940s and 1970s has not been considered of value, despite the fact that it constitutes an important proportion of the country's built environment. Silvia Arango introduces the 1950s as follows:

In global terms it could be said that the modern movement in Colombia, now identified as official architecture of the "establishment", followed a similar path to other parts of the world: away from the essentialist purism from the 1940s, was drifting in a fortuitous formalism that although it sometimes produced aesthetically elaborated examples, it already showed signs of conceptual depletion. They began to feel then, attacks directed at different flanks. (Silvia Arango 1989, 235)

Samper Martínez (2000) highlights a few state projects in the *Época de Oro*, one of the few accounts of modern architecture in Colombia, but their focus tends more to private housing and commercial projects. And there is no major allusion to the dictatorship as the promoter of such development. Téllez Castañeda (1977) traces relations with the political and economic context of the architectural projects from the 1930s in *Crítica e Imagen*; there is general information about how a number of projects were framed under the National Plan of Public Works, but little overview of it.

The most relevant Latin American architectural journals of the time, such as *Proa*, *Casas y Lotes*, *Arquitecturas*, *CIA (Construcción, Ingeniería, Arquitectura)*, *Ingeniería y Arquitectura*, reported mainly on housing projects. International journals such as *Architectural Record*, *Architecture d'aujourd'hui*, highlight the innovations of the young Colombian architects of that time, also stressing on private housing. Only *Escala*¹³ since the mid-1960s developed a series on different infrastructural projects, i.e. hotels, schools, airports, markets, hospitals, and so on, but without any specific reference to the Rojas National Plan of Public Works. The literature gap has remained for more than 50 years. At the same time, these infrastructural projects have been in use as part of the urban life of various cities. The political history keeps its polarity, as the political capital built by Rojas Pinilla still constitutes an active legacy for his family; indeed the former mayor of Bogotá, (2008-2011) Samuel Moreno Rojas, was his grandson.¹⁴

• Recent discussions

During the past decade, a growing interest in modern architecture built during the 1950s and 1960s has taken place.¹⁵ Scholarship by the new generation of researchers addresses from different perspectives architectural objects produced at the time. This has coincided with the broader scholarly interest in peripheral architectures. Mainly, these research projects have been associated with Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Universitat Polytechnica de Catalunya, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, University of Texas, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, more recently with Columbia University, and now with the Bartlett School of Architecture. The research of architects such as María Pia Fontana, Luis Fernando Molina, Isabel Llanos, and Hugo Mondragón, among others, is establishing a canon of study for

¹³ A Colombian architectural journal

¹⁴ It was not only General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla who built on the political capital achieved during his regime, but other members of the family have also had since then active political careers, including his daughter María Eugenia Moreno de Rojas, and son-in-law Samuel Moreno Díaz, and grandsons Ivan Moreno Rojas, and Samuel Moreno Rojas. This political capital remains as active as polemic.

¹⁵ Recent economic history has identified the 1950s as a period of consolidation of the industrialization of the country that had started in previous decades. However, little credit is given to how this development was supported. Indeed, there are few references to the new infrastructure and services the state was providing. Cf (Sáenz Rovner 2002)

modern architecture in Colombia. Most of these scholars concentrate their attention on what they call project [formal] analysis: in other words, the study of isolated objects focused on its formal and spatial systems, especially using the CIAM grid as its methodology.

In addition, emerging scholars such as Patricio del Real (2012), and Robert Gonzalez (2011) have researched overviews and intersections of Latin American architecture, in a way continuing the earlier and probably lesser known work outside the region, of Roberto Segre (1975), Damian Bayón et al. (1979), Miguel Angel Roca (1995), and Francisco Liernur (2002).

Approaching ideas of power in the Cold War context

The notion of power is a keystone in the study of the social and political implications of architecture. This concept has been broadly theorized in the social sciences, particularly in anthropology, history and philosophy. Furthermore, the interconnection between power and aesthetics has established the grounds for an active debate since the second third of the twentieth century. The architectural discussion on the subject has been notable in European and American academia over the last few decades, and is currently expanding towards new regions of the globe, and acquiring a growing body of references.¹⁶ However, most of these studies are largely focused on traditional and explicit manifestations of power. During the Cold War, and in the case under analysis, formal expressions of power and tactics were not at all clear-cut.

Thus, scholars have found that strategies in use during the Cold War such as “soft power” are helpful in terms of understanding what would otherwise be fragments of contradictory and ambiguous data, as this historical material has recently become public. In a similar trend, I found a wider understanding about use of “camouflage” tactics results essential in the production, mediation, and reception of architecture. These concepts were crucial in the post-war context, and here are ascribed to the built

¹⁶ C.f. (Farrar 2008), (Maran 2006), (Hirst 2005), (Dovey 1999)

environment. Though this is not a detailed account of all the contributions made to these subjects, my aim is to explore the concept of power, and its strategies in order to create the grounds for the proposed analysis of Colombian modern state architecture promoted by the dictatorship during the 1950s.

• **Architecture as an instrument of power**

Architecture as one of the most important materializations of state power and authority has been an often visited topic. Architectural materialization is conventionally understood in two different ways: first, it is the result of the “will” of a particular society; and, secondly, it is a conditioner of that society, in what has been criticized as a deterministic approach. However, the complexity of the duo – architecture and power – requires that reductions be avoided and established parameters challenged.

Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1979) assumes power is a determinant in the structuring of society: “spatial practices of power can be modelled as enabling and constraining relations between structure and agency”. In his work structure is read as rules and resources, and agency as the will or capacity to transform. From Giddens, I would trace a relation to the idea of Michel de Certeau about the malleability of society through materializations on space as anchors of memory, depending on the structure and the agency (Certeau 1984). In other words, society’s *milieu*, in addition to the temporal and spatial situations, is defined by political agency.

Considering physical and temporal conditions has been a commonplace within architectural studies. However, political aspects are no less important, and may alter the former in a definitive manner. The temporal and spatial context may be the most evident, whereas the influences of the political context on the configuration of space may be more difficult to demonstrate. This is the specific challenge posed by my own research, since political decisions made by the dictatorship are not open to public scrutiny and debate.

Connections created by the structuring of these spatial relations rely on their dialectic and duality. On the one hand, space may be a medium for the power implemented, and on the other, it may be an outcome of the politics. In other words,

built form operates as both a conditioner and a representation of power. This is how I will treat built form throughout my thesis.

In treating space as both ideological frame and social construction, I have been influenced by Henri Lefebvre, particularly in *The Production of Space*. (Lefebvre, 1991) It might be relevant to point out here that, for Lefebvre, space as a conditioner has a double connotation: it is a means of production, as an engine of society; and it is simultaneously a commodity, a device of social reproduction and control. Concurrently, for Lefebvre space constitutes a representation, that is an embodiment of knowledge, ideology and “utopia” – namely, an artefact that reflects as a social product the society that created it, and that, in a dialectical way, is a conditioner of what is being represented. Thus, shaping society is an operational and functional role of space. As Lefebvre has remarked: “the space thus produced, also serves as a tool of thought and of action; that is in addition to being a means of production, it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power”. (Lefebvre 1991, 26) This idea of the materialization of relations confers an active role on space; it is not an inert locus. The production, reproduction and representation of space imply a permanent dynamism, conditioning the coexistence and cohesion of society. Space as a social product is a result of the permanent construction of diverse relations, from which it can be derived that society and space are produced simultaneously and reciprocally.

Lefebvre warns us that “the practice of power can be hidden within the structures and representations of space”; (Lefebvre 1991, 389-91) this gives even more significance to the ways in which space is produced, and how it can construct illusions of freedom, and forms of control operating under the simulation of innocence and transparency, which might be decoded tracing the appropriate relations. Again, this is what this research attempts to trace in the case of the infrastructure produced by the Rojas regime.

In a similar vein, Pierre Bourdieu claims that spaces can be “political instruments [...], of which they are the product, and of which they reproduce the structures in a transformed form”. (Bourdieu 1994, 160) He proposes to connect motivations with these structures, generating a dialectical relationship. For Bourdieu, what motivates social relations, ideologies and practices is what might be conceived as a strategy. As we will see, the awareness of the presence of different and intricate

tactics is key to understanding the built phenomenon generated during the Rojas dictatorship.

• **Effacement on Colombian architecture**

Hidden strategies of power were common during the Cold War. In that context, my claim is that the production of the built environment during the dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla aimed at a deliberate effacement. –As we will see the stratagem did indeed allow the regime to address simultaneously national and international agendas. The multiplicity of small and dispersed projects may be unexpected for a totalitarian regime such as this. However, it corresponds to a well-structured and complex strategy of “double-truth”. That is, a double agenda of welfare and warfare, through the use of soft power and camouflaging tactics. With foreign cooperation the national government received technical advice, materials provision, and funding to pursue its ambitions and necessary plans and projects. However, the internal agenda of that cooperation and the apparently inoffensive ‘aid’ offered is a fertile terrain to explore.

At this point one can infer that the regime’s withholding of information was also intentional, not only through neglecting to report publicly the decisions taken by an authoritarian government, but also as part of the strategic operations. A lack of records of the discussions – to establish which projects should take priority, or considerations about the convenience of those supposedly unrelated buildings that welcomed modern life – seem to be an indicator of the dictatorship’s guidelines. Such may be the case with the dispersed register of individuals instead of firms in the administrative records, or the absence of the participation of the US Corps of Engineers in the Ministry of Public Works records.¹⁷ By contrast, in the US State Department records in NARA there is information about their active involvement in cooperation projects in Colombia.¹⁸

¹⁷ Names correspond to architects, engineers, landscape designers, and so on. Ultimately, unidentified individuals.

¹⁸ Estimations about the lack of records cannot be fully comprehensive by virtue of their secretive nature.

What is contradictory, however, is the persistent use of the strategic transformation of the built environment undertaken by the dictatorship as propaganda. Such visibility ended up being a guarantee of invisibility. As we will see, the policy for built environment was fundamental in building the political capital of General Rojas and his family, but this was clearly not the only purpose of the whole enterprise, or the reason for all the support it received in terms of international cooperation.

In Colombia, double-truth strategies in the built environment took place on different and complementary levels: one was ideological, what is known in military strategy as psychological operations; the other was physical, following patterns of what was known as industrial camouflage.

Complexity of the historical context of architecture

Colombia is recognized as one of the most solid democracies in South America.¹⁹ However, the country experienced four years of a military regime that is still a problematic historical subject, as records remain fragmented and polarized. It is also a difficult subject to tackle when confronted with our own political ideas; when it raises uncomfortable questions about different actors; and, moreover, when what is questioned are its internal strategies in a country where security is an unavoidable and sensitive issue. Nevertheless, that dictatorship took place, and it is necessary to understand both what its architecture and infrastructure embodies and the historical consequences. The dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla has so far remained an obscure period, on which few historians have produced balanced studies. Part of the difficulty in evaluating its legacy is that it continues to influence politics and society in quite direct ways.²⁰ Under a telling title, *The making of modern Colombia, a nation in spite of itself*, the scholar David Bushnell (1993) puts it this way: on the one hand, the dictatorship significantly reduced the violence in the most turbulent areas of the country

¹⁹ Other countries in Latin America had had multiple and prolonged dictatorships. Most of these were during the 1970s, this period having become known as “the lost decade”.

²⁰ Based on the political capital created during this regime, there are still members of Rojas’ family taking part in the current political scene. For instance, in one of the most recent elections his grandson was elected Mayor of Bogotá 2008-2011. Yet, he was suspended before finishing his period in office, and is under investigation for corruption.

with different forms of repression, censorship and abuses of force; on the other hand, it integrated the furthest regions of the country by providing them with an infrastructure and social programs. Indeed, this military government of the 1950s was initially backed by international cooperation provided by the United States, and others, during the Cold War.

Figure 3. Colombia seen by the Institute of Inter-American Affairs: a fragment of the country, and dramatic geographical conditions © RAC

This brings us to two observations that will underpin this thesis. First, Latin America – and Colombia with it – has almost disappeared from the Cold War history in the last 40 years. Secondly, the conditions of a dictatorship have led to a highly polarized political history. In consequence, in the first case, it has been necessary for this research to go back to the oldest material – that is, to evidence from publications of the 1940s to 1970s; and, in the second case, to incorporate more than the material written in those decades that is, to include more recent and balanced political studies. Although it does not seem feasible to claim a sort of neutrality, what I will present here are the ambivalent, fragmented and contradictory records of a period that deserves a better understanding.

• **A methodological problem: data access**

A methodological problem arose during this research, concerning documents and archives, which involved secrecy, and sensitivity. Because of the dictatorship and the Cold War, I found two main obstacles. On the one hand, though a few archives do already exist which contain original governmental records about this specific period, some institutions do not consider them to be of historical interest. Consequently, most of the archival material has not had conventional preservation treatment or been catalogued. On the other hand, given the political particularities of Colombia, both then and now, a considerable part of the political information and existing material has been connected to the country's security. As a result, I have been granted access to some material that still has restricted access, or that has become available through "freedom of information" acts, and therefore I have had to sign a confidentiality agreement and cannot divulge what can be considered sensitive material for national security. I have

remained faithful to this commitment whilst pursuing a cultural analysis of the built environment phenomena.

Figure 4. Archival material of the Rojas presidency 1953-1957 without preservation © AGN

Even more complicated is the scenario regarding architectural documents. There is a notoriously weak tradition of keeping records and archives in Colombia, so that the scarce remaining material available from institutions and architectural studios becomes particularly valuable. Given the lack of strict policies and regulations about the built environment, Colombia, unlike Portugal or Germany, does not keep written accounts of architectural projects in order for them to be approved. Both the records and omissions in Colombian architectural, and political history thus constitute a primary source.

After an initial investigation of the National Plan of Public Works, I defined a specific case study: the Naval College. Not only was this original and partially built architectural complex representative of the regime's built environment policies, but also, and perhaps more importantly, I achieved access to the institutional information about it, and have stayed on site whilst collecting information. The architectural complex itself constitutes a key piece of evidence.

In Colombia, official information becomes of public interest after 50 years, and so I have also taken the opportunity offered by the relatively recent reception of the collection of this regime's presidency at the *Archivo General de la Nación* (Colombian National Archives). However, this information is still dispersed, and uncatalogued. This has also been the case with US archives that after a similar period have decreased levels of confidentiality. Besides the copious material I have accessed and dealt with for this research, admittedly, the evidence is still circumstantial. I never found any explicit or specific references that related to the strategies implemented on the built environment during the dictatorship. Indeed, the lack of any explicit documents of the Plan on the part of the dictatorship ended up being one of the most significant findings of this research.

Therefore, this research will take into consideration not only the original blueprints of the Naval College, but also alternative sources such as Rojas historical

documents, official reports of the Ministry of Public Works from 1953-1961, recently declassified diplomatic communications, oral history,²¹ media reports, and ephemera, covering a necessary period of reference from the 1930s to the 1970s. Wherever possible, I have filled gaps of information through different institutional and personal archives in Colombia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. However, I have not only relied on written documents. More than twenty personal interviews with architects and other relevant actors of the time (former functionaries, and architectural historians), have greatly enriched this research.

Regarding language and orthography: the larger part of my evidence is in Spanish, so what is included in the thesis are my translations (unless stated otherwise). I also use the Spanish style for names, which in most cases include a compound surname; such is the case of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, which is shortened to Rojas. And, finally, I am retaining the use of American spelling for official names and original quotations.

• **Relevance of the research**

It might seem obvious that a Naval College would be representative of a dictatorship, but the peculiarities of the Colombian case cast it in a different light. Intriguingly, the dictatorship claimed to be building a new nation, and one of its flagship projects was the school of the naval armed forces of the country. It is worth mentioning that, although Colombia has broad maritime areas in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the public does not recognize the Navy as a war command.²² Institutionally, it is a clear presence of the state and a permanent point of reference for the inhabitants of Cartagena, one of the most important ports on the Caribbean coast since colonial times, even if they cannot access it physically. Indeed the Navy, as an institution, is

²¹ Although oral history has been a valuable and orientating source of information – given the distant period of study, and its sensitivity – I have tried to cross check information gathered in different interviews with alternative evidence.

²² Colombian military forces include the Army, the Navy and the Air force. Within the country, the Army is the largest force, which has a vast presence in the territory being identified as the core of the defence system. By contrast, the Navy is less visible in daily life and a common citizen would identify the Navy with high profile officials in white uniform who appear as aides de camp either at official ceremonies of the presidency, or at the national beauty contest.

part of the identity of the city. However, in spite of the complex's strategic importance, it is widely regarded as an academic centre, rather than a military base.

Figure 5. Naval College Location in Cartagena © IGAC (modified)

Through the analysis of the National Plan of Public Works and the Naval College, my contention is that the regime's developments in the built environment were part of a complex strategy that was premised on misrepresentation in order to achieve very specific aims. It was a "double truth" game, where welfare and warfare concerns of the time were entangled. This thesis maintains that it was this intertwining of welfare and warfare that has driven the conflictive relation to these projects.

This research contributes to the growing scholarship about Latin American modernist architecture, but it is also a starting point for further studies. The information analysed has already opened a Pandora's box of questions and issues and it does not by any means pretend to be a comprehensive history of the period. However, it does seek to focus new light on these works, a significant number of which are currently under threat from demolition, and to open up a debate about what they represent in Colombian history and society.

• Overview of the structure

The structure of the thesis is divided into three parts. The first part provides some necessary context for a more specific discussion of Colombian architecture. The opening chapter about the historical context starts from a familiar terrain of international history, in which I will situate Latin America, before focusing on the internal particularities of Colombia. The Cold War not only embodied tension between East and West; it expanded and made visible the North-South relation. It conditioned social and cultural development during the twentieth century. After the Second World War, foreign countries identified Latin America as a fertile terrain with valuable natural and mineral resources. Like most countries of the region during the mid-twentieth century, Colombia began a transition from rural to urban society. Social and political conditions shaped the urbanization process, which was highly influenced by the

international involvement. On the one hand, the mass media permanently promoted new living standards. On the other, the military government developed assertive campaigns about the creation of the new state.

From this context, the specific discourses and strategies that shaped the spatial production of the time, will be addressed in the second chapter. Consequently, this chapter considers international policies and practices that will help to understand the Colombian case in relation to the complex post-war dynamics. The Cold War was a latent conflict; its tactics, means, and extent were often distorted. This historical research sets out to expand to the Latin American periphery the study of the intrinsic relation between socio-politics and the built environment that exists in European and American scholarly literature. This cultural approach to the study of architecture constitutes pioneering work in the field in this South American country.

The second part of this thesis addresses the specific case of the built environment in Colombia during the dictatorship, and constitutes the core of this research. The relation between architecture and politics during the Rojas regime was manifested through the National Plan of Public Works. Therefore the third chapter presents an account of the Plan as the government portrayed it, mainly based on records of the official reports and media, and discusses how it articulated the national, regional, and urban development. The government constantly mentioned the Plan, yet what it actually consisted of was never known in detail by the public. Indeed, this Plan is still unknown as we will see.

The fourth chapter discusses the national project undertaken during the 1950s. The National Plan of Public Works did not directly encompass the guidelines of international experts who had had a professional presence in recent years such as Le Corbusier, and Wiener and Sert. It was portrayed as an inclusive plan that sought the incorporation of more distant regions through a group of isolated and dispersed buildings, and works of infrastructure. It establishes an interpretation of the policy of spatial production following the national and international agendas at the urban level.

The fifth and sixth chapters analyse the case study: the Naval College *Almirante Padilla*. The fifth chapter presents the architectural complex of the Naval College in Cartagena. The original project of the complex will be explained. Even though the urban and architectural project was never built in its entirety, it was

designed at a very detailed level. On the urban level, it works as a satellite area of the main city. The college was conceived as a self-contained unit on an island of 163 acres. It amply fulfils the architectural requirements of the military institution, which anticipated a population of 1,500 cadets. ([ENAP] 1946-1976)

The following chapter traces the connections of the architectural project in order to shed light on the strategies in use by the regime. It characterizes its participants, the interpretation given by the institution, and its inhabitants, and relates the project to wider operations. It should however be stressed that the evidence gathered from the field, archives and oral history is as contradictory as it is illustrative.

The mediation and instrumentalization of architecture will be discussed in the third part of this thesis. In the seventh chapter I discuss the implementation of ambivalent strategies on architectural projects of the 1950s. They were not an exceptional process, nor a solitary one. The proposed utopia confronted deep-rooted social problems and vast territories, making it yet more difficult to fulfil some of the expectations of the society. In this sense, the cultural and historical consequences of this process will be addressed: it was a modernity without modernization.

Drawing on the idea that architecture is a material representation, this research project takes the Naval College of Cartagena as a lens of interpretation through which to analyse the cultural and political implications and significance of the National Plan of Public Works. Through a prominent development in Colombia, architecture illustrates larger principles of the complex dynamics involved in the national and international context of the mid-twentieth century. As part of the contemporary debate about the Cold War's impacts, this thesis aims to contribute to the understanding of these relations of architecture and power in a peripheral region such as Latin America. From an academic perspective, it is as fascinating, as it is challenging, to trace these relations that are manifested in the built environment, but that have fallen into oblivion.

Part I

1. Setting the context: 1930-1970

Understanding the complex and particular context of Colombian architecture in the 1950s requires a wider panorama. The historical window between the 1930s and 1970s will allow us to trace not only the architectural particulars, but also political, economic and social aspects that have shaped the built environment created during Rojas dictatorship between 1953 and 1957. Once the national conditions are inserted within the international frame, new interpretations of the development of modern architecture in the country are possible. The well-known international circumstances of the Cold War, thus, will be linked to the internal situation of this Latin American nation. Therefore, I focus this research on four years of dictatorship in the context of the historical period of four decades.

Figure 6. Common images of the mid-twentieth century: inauguration Luis Angel Arango Library, 1958 © BLAA

Contemporary interest in the Cold War is continuously growing as historical analysis becomes more informed, due to the lessening of restrictions on official documents of that time. So far, scholarly literature has focused mainly on the political, cultural and military tensions between Eastern Bloc and Western Hemisphere. The North-South inter-connection, however, is still a lesser known terrain to explore. How did this phenomenon affect the relation between the traditional centres of power (such as the United States, European countries, and the USSR) and developing countries in the “Global South”?²³ In the case of architectural history, the insertion of Latin America into the context of the Cold War is the subject of on-going research projects;²⁴ thus, in this

²³ Growing research in the Cold War is taking place mainly in different institutes of Latin American studies, as is the case of the LSE, ILAS - SLAS, and LASA. It usually focuses on economics, politics, and social aspects.

²⁴ Such is the case of the on-going research projects at MoMA, Columbia University, and Syracuse University about which there is not much information available at the moment. Some advances have been presented at academic events such as the SAH 2012 and SAH 2013. Perhaps the most relevant is the research coordinated by Professor Barry Bergdoll (2011): MoMA is preparing an exhibition for 2014-2015 about the role of the museum with the interconnections of cultural politics and modern architecture in Latin America in the early years of the Cold War, revisiting the exhibition and publication

thesis I will focus on the relationships and influences between US foreign policy and modern architecture in Colombia in the 1950s.

The wider scenario extends over decades and multiple actors; for the purposes of this research, however, I emphasize the relationship of the United States and Latin America, and more specifically Colombia, as it was highly influential, most publicized, and has reachable data access. Other foreign influences were present, but their impact is perhaps less concrete, more dispersed, and individual. As an area of study, these foreign interactions have yet to receive further attention. This research, then, highlights aspects of the relationship that had a more tangible impact on the development of the Latin American built environment.

In order to demonstrate how Colombia was not an isolated case during the Cold War, I will introduce in this Chapter post-war global conditions, common discourses, the strategy implemented, and alliances established, while also expanding on the particular situation of the country. This context, thus, brings into visibility the dichotomy between reality and representation of this Latin American country.

1.1. Colombia in a wider picture

Despite the fact that Colombia on its own did not have an outstanding historical status during the Cold War, it was part of a region that proved highly relevant in the international scenario. The reference to Latin America is, therefore, necessary in order to understand political, social and economic conditions that differ from the ones of other regions during the post-war period. Although the region was indirectly part of the international latent conflict, American countries became more visible in the international realm during early years of the Cold War, without assuming a leading role. Although Cuba was a prominent reference, it is just the tip of the iceberg of what was happening

organized in 1955 by Arthur Drexler and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, "Latin American architecture since 1945".

in the continent. It was a camp of operation and experimentation from other governments, as we will see.

Figure 7. Prominent figures who took part on Pan-American cultural exchanges organized by the ICA © RAC

In order to situate Latin America, I use published material of the period, and official government documents of both Colombia and the United States, and contrast these with the well-established political literature. During the Cold War period, there were numerous publications addressing different aims. Particularly during the early stages on the political confrontation, leading governments of both sides in tension, i.e. Western Allies and Eastern Block, as well as scholars, produced relevant material as part of their interest in keeping their communities informed.²⁵ Primarily, there is material produced by the US governmental agencies, for whom within the “Western Hemisphere”, Latin America had a vital role. Thus it is possible to find a relevant trace of debates in the US Congress, and the creation of specific dependencies to address the relation the region had with the United States.²⁶ After the 1970s, however, the region becomes less prominent, as the focus of interest moved to other regions such as Africa, and Asia.

1.2. “Grand strategy”

After the Second World War, tensions between the super-powers that represented different ideologies were predominant, conditioning the political scenario. The antagonism between democracy and communism determined international relations for more than 40 years. New forms of conflict and diplomacy took place, and

²⁵ For an in-depth examination see: (Daniels 1952), (Berle Jr 1961), (Carnoy 1962), (Parkinson 1974), (David 1976), (Tusk 1977), (Tillapaugh 1973)

²⁶ The Inter American Affairs office, Organization of American States, and the Pan American Union channelled foreign relations of the US government with Latin American countries.

shaped not only the reconstruction of areas affected after the total war, but the development in other regions.²⁷

The ideological rivalry created three defined groups: the Western Allies, Eastern Bloc and the Non-Aligned. The strategy proposed by the US diplomat George Kennan labelled as the “Grand Strategy” illustrates the latent situation. Kennan reported on the political conditions, and suggested a secure US strategy in an internal communication with the State department, known historically as “Kennan’s long telegram”, stating: “[the strategy] must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.” (Kennan 1946) It was neither peace, nor war.

Figure 8. Telegram, George Kennan to George Marshall [“Long Telegram”], February 22, 1946 © NARA

▪ **Post-War panorama**

Political historians, such as Eric Hobsbawm (1995), have identified the post-war period as marked by a latent conflict between two antagonist ideologies embodied in the principal super-powers: the Soviet Union and the United States. There was a permanent risk of escalation into active war. This prompted each super-power to expand its influence into allied countries and to develop new forms of warfare. Other territories were therefore, by extension, spaces of operation.

The Cold War was an economic as well as political competition. Both superpowers built huge stocks of arms and gave lavish aid to their allies, while also seeking to compete in domestic growth and welfare. In so doing, both strained their systems. Ideology drove them to compete and drove them to aid their friends. The Western economies were better able to provide guns and economic assistance, as their system was more adaptable to technological and economic changes and they thus came to be

²⁷ See (Kramer 1999), (Hixson 1997), (Kuznick et al. 2001), (Donohue 2012)

perceived as more successful than the Soviet alternative.
(Sewell 2002)

Although the two super-powers in the global realm, the United States and the Soviet Union, never confronted each other directly in their own territories, there were skirmishes in other regions that helped to escalate the tension. The Korean War (1950-1953) in particular demonstrated the lack of preparedness of the Western Allies to respond to the Soviet Union's attempt to expand into new territories. (Eisenhower 2007, 8) Even if this was publicized differently, internal fears in the US government were roused, and there was the highest perception of latent danger during Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidency (1953-1961).

▪ Cold War in Latin America

The former US diplomat, Nathan L Whetten,²⁸ acting as Chairman of the Brian McMahon Lectures in the University of Connecticut, introduced the annual series devoted to Latin America in 1961 as follows:

It [i.e. this lecture series] is concerned with Latin America, an area about which most North Americans know far too little despite the fact that it includes twenty [sic] different countries and contains a rapidly expanding population that is now larger than that of the United States. The geographical position of the Latin American countries and their increasing importance in world affairs would seem to require that they receive increasing attention in American foreign policy. (Berle Jr 1961, 3)

Continental affairs have indeed been essential for the US government. The Latin American historian Hubert Herring (1955) explained the relevance of the region by highlighting the common ground of the almost 40 countries of the American continent, sharing similar roots to colonies in the oppression of the indigenous

²⁸ Nathan Lasalle Whetten, diplomat and scholar of the University of Connecticut in rural sociology, was an expert Latin Americanist during the Cold War; he published *Rural México* in 1948 (published in Spanish in 1953) and *Guatemala: the land and the people* in 1961.

population, and slavery. Herring, however, also pointed out how, with industrialisation, the differences between North and South deepened. Since independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the United States has attempted through its foreign policy to expand its domain into other territories of the continent. Herring argued that “Latin America” – integrating within that denomination the Caribbean, Central and South America – not only comprised double the US population by the mid-twentieth century, but also contained a vast diversity and richness of natural and mineral resources.

Figure 9. Latin America as a backyard: “Civilization, the last chance” by Herblock, originally published in 1939 ©LOC/Herblock Foundation

Despite the historical reference of the Western Hemisphere representing all the Allied countries, I have found that in documents of the US State Department, the American Continent alone is referred to as the Western Hemisphere. The United States came to see Latin America as its “backyard”, as it has informally been named. Thinking about Latin America has therefore been for the United States part of a strategy to protect its own interests.

Historically, various instruments have been used at different periods by the US government to intervene in Latin American affairs, and consolidate its commercial and political domination there. To illustrate this, I have identified the most influential precedents: the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the Organization of American States founded in 1890, and the Platt Amendment of 1904. The Monroe Doctrine declared the American continent to be out of bounds of European colonialism, while the Organization of American States (OAS) represented an attempt to integrate the interests of the continent. Finally, the Platt Amendment claimed: “the United States assumed the power to supervise the internal affairs of states in the Caribbean and Latin America”. (Blouet et al. 2010, 106) After the First World War, the Good Neighbour policy formulated by the United States in 1933 was presented as a call for solidarity in the hemisphere, facilitating influences in different aspects of Latin American countries in the name of common progress and wellbeing. I will expand on this policy later on.

During the twentieth century, US interventions in Latin America have covered a wide spectrum: military operations, purchases of land, occupations of territory, supplies

of arms (either to insurgent groups, or to governments in power), plots concerning coups d'état, trade embargos, protectorates, and economic and technical cooperation. Even if it is not the focus of their study, scholars such as Brian W. Blouet and Olwyn M. Blouet have presented detailed accounts of different intervention events. (2010)

Perhaps the most prominent instances of the involvement of Latin America in the Cold War are related to the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and the new government's declaration of its intention to expand revolution in the continent. Concerns about the empowerment of the left in the region grew, and the radicalisation of propaganda and politics reached its height. Events such as the Bay of Pigs, the Trade Embargo, and finally the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 were crucial in this conflict. It is, however, necessary to point out that these were not isolated events.

Since the late 1950s the US government had assumed that communist governments supported the populist authorities of the region, promoting leftist ideas. Such was the case of Perón in Argentina, Perez Jiménez in Venezuela, Odría in Peru, and Rojas Pinilla in Colombia, though only at the end of his period in power. In response, the US missions labelled them as targets: relations were tightened, uneasy conditions predominated, and subsequently the flow of funds was substantially reduced. Public information through the media available – particularly distributed through the Voice of America – stressed the impossibility of the United States cooperating with regimes that “seek American help but in their own countries publicly insult or oppose the US”. (Berle Jr 1961, 18)

The US diplomat Adolf A. Berle Jr clarified the situation: “Pleasant or not, the need of defense is a reality. Without which, no program designed to increase human welfare in this area is likely to succeed.” (1961) Indeed, Latin America was openly declared a “specific front” by the Communist Party Conference in Moscow in 1959. Berle, considered an expert in Inter-American affairs, contended that the United States had credible information that the Soviet takeover of Latin America was set for 1963. (Tucker 2007, 121)

Towards the end of the 1960s, there was another period of increasing strain. The tension between leftist and communist factions, and right-wing conservative groups mirrored what was taking place on a bigger scale between the Eastern bloc and the Western allies. In turn, each group received the considerable support of actors of

the international conflict. Various insurgent groups and socialist parties developed in the region with the open support of Soviet or Chinese communist regimes. The Cuban revolution was still a reference of the triumph of the popular movement. In some cases, they took power by peaceful means, as was the case in 1970 of Salvador Allende in Chile. Amidst the radicalization of the period, there was little space allowed to consolidate any socialist idea, which was rapidly labelled as communist, and therefore attacked.

• **Inter-continental relations**

For the purpose of contextualizing Colombia, I highlight here some of the historical characteristics of the region that conditioned its foreign relationships. Latin American countries have had a degree of instability, shifting between authoritarianism and democracy. For instance, the scholar Paul Lewis (2006) introduces a more extended list of authoritarian governments in the region during the period from the 1930s to the 1970s; one can count, however, 11 governments openly recognized as dictatorships in different countries. Eight out of 12 South American countries were under military rule during what has been known as “the lost decade” of the 1970s.

Figure 10. Dictatorships in Latin America during the Cold War. © MPSB based on Bethell

The Colombian dictatorship took place at the beginning of the Cold War, in other words in a different period from the vast majority of the regimes in the 1970s. It was also one of the shortest regimes, in comparison with the average of others lasting in power for 14.4 years each.

Another phenomenon distinctive to Colombia is represented by still unresolved boundary disputes, despite stability in the formation of countries since the beginning of the nineteenth century; such is the case of the borders of Colombia with Peru,

Venezuela, and more recently with Nicaragua, which would reconfigure the domain of an important part of the Caribbean Sea.²⁹

There are three additional aspects that are more or less strong in each country, as the Latin American historian James Dunkley observed. First, social inequality in the region persists, preserving similar social structures to those of colonial times. Second, there has been a consistent lack of social services. And third, the region has been a massive producer of raw materials exported mainly to the United States and Europe. (Domínguez 1999)

Perhaps the latest act of strong and overt US intervention in the region, the invasion of Panamá in 1989, coincides with the beginning of the end of the Cold War. However, the United States maintains a permanent presence in and influence on the politics of the continent.

▪ Colombia in the Cold War

During the first half of the twentieth century, whilst most countries were struggling with the consequences of the First World War, Colombia enjoyed a degree of prosperity. The first substantial revenue came in the late 1920s and comprised the compensation paid by the United States to support Panamá's independence – usually known as the “purchase of Panamá”.³⁰ Historically, this transaction generated in Colombia what the scholar Vernon Lee Fluharty³¹ documented as “Dance of the Millions”, as it generated a bonanza in the national economy, despite the loss of

²⁹ Since 2007 the territorial and maritime dispute between Colombia and Nicaragua has escalated to the International Court of Justice, whose latest judgement was released on November 19th, 2012 (still in appellation), which changed borders between the two countries.

³⁰ Aware of the relevance of the Caribbean and its possible inter-oceanic connection, mentioned by Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan in *The Influence of Seapower upon History* in 1890, the United States government encouraged and supported the growing independence of a part of the population, and as a compensation paid to Colombia an economic indemnification. After Colombia rejected in 1903 the Hay-Herran treaty, which proposed “to lease in perpetuity” the area of the Panamá canal that was built by the United States Corps of Engineers – in operation in 1914 –, the government of Theodore Roosevelt paid 25 million dollars to Colombia under the Thomson-Urrutia treaty, signed in 1921, under the condition of the recognition of Panamá's independence. An additional transaction with the new country of Panamá – that understood it owed its independence to the United States – assured their lease of the territory to build, and control the canal for a century.

³¹ The scholar Vernon Lee Fluharty situates this period of economic prosperity between 1930 and 1956.

territory and the implicit consequences. Almost simultaneously, on account of the favourable production and price of grain, the coffee trade bred an economic bonanza documented by the historian Marco Palacios (1980).³² The coffee market maintained an upwards financial flow. During the Second War World important reserves of oil had been identified and, with foreign investment, these began to be exploited by the state. As a consequence, Colombia enjoyed a degree of economic stability. (Fluharty 1957)

In addition to its solid economy, I identify two further factors that defined the position in which Colombia found itself at the beginning of the Cold War: its foreign alliances, and its strategic location in the American continent.

• **Post-War alliances**

The United States government regarded Colombia very favourably, as is shown in the 1954 annual country report of the Department of State. (USOM 1948-1961)

The recent change of leadership in Colombia has had no immediate impact upon activities of Point IV [...] the regular programmes of technical assistance were continued, but no efforts were made to effect negotiations through the official channels of the Colombian Government. [...] Despite the favourable reception given to the point IV under the prior government, it would appear that the new government is creating conditions more favourable both to the people of Colombia and Point IV for technical assistance. (USOM 1948-1961)

The country proved to be a devoted US ally during the Second War World, being the first Latin American country to break off relations with Japan. Later, Colombia was the only other American country to participate in the Korean War (1950-1953), in an attempt to show the commitment of the nation to the defence of democracy

³² Cf Marco Palacio's, newly edited book (2009), reports that in the 1950s the Colombian peso was a strong currency almost equivalent to the US dollar. The official change kept on 2.51 COP per USD

elsewhere. This participation in the United Nations Command helped to invigorate relations. Both governments regularly mentioned it. ([US Department of State] 1983)

The internal conflict in Colombia that escalated after the assassination of the popular presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948 was another aspect of concern from the US perspective. As Soviet influence was gaining ground in Latin America, this event roused consternation as the possible instability represented an opportunity for communism. Amid the internal instability, the Colombian government decided to cease diplomatic relations with the USSR, and later with Cuba, creating a closer proximity to the United States. (Safford et al. 2002b)

• **Strategic location**

Colombia was vitally important to the security of the continent, not least because its strategic location supported the Panamá Canal and allowed control of the Caribbean Sea, which was to some extent the Achilles' heel of the Americas. The Panamá Canal had a vital value, not only in economic, but also in military terms. The transit between oceans, and the access to the fragmented Caribbean, brought elements of defence that were highly valued by the United States.

Figure 11. Colombian territory in the world © World Geographic Maps (modified)

Colombia represents two other main factors to be considered in terms of its location: first, it is the Latin American country with the most extensive continental shelves in both oceans, and the closest proximity to the most vulnerable areas of the Caribbean. Secondly, Colombia's vast territory is located at an equidistant north-south point of the continent.

In consequence, to strengthen defence capabilities in Colombia became an important aim in the international realm. (Tucker 2007) What is more, Solmirano asserts that Colombia became one of the main actors in the definition of priority projects and presence of US military assistance. (2007) This alliance helped in developing security plans for the region, and simultaneously backed the internal policies of development, aspects that I will develop further on.

1.3. Colombia's particularities

The internal processes of each country have an impact on its international relations. One could say that Colombia's predominant characteristics are complexity and singularity. Notably, what is peculiar in this country is the combination of key factors that have remained unsolved throughout its history: a "social gap", latent violence, regional diversity, the uncompromising role of the state, the richness of resources and political indolence. The political transitions that occurred during the period between 1930 and 1970 may be an accurate framework for the study of the social and political events of the twentieth century in Colombia, as they are particularly representative of this complicated situation. This generates in turn, a particular scenario for the development of the country's urban centres.

▪ Geographical complexity

In addition to the significance of its location, the fact that Colombia covers an area of 1,141,748 square kilometres³³ adds other factors of consideration in the interior of the country. In this respect Stephen Gudeman (1990) states that culturally, in Colombia, control of the land has a greater significance to the people than its material value as a resource; it represents their "strength", the base of production and a *leitmotif*. This may be explained by two basic factors: on the one hand, the richness of the soil itself, which offers diverse means of subsistence and, on the other, the struggle for the land's possession, implying the control of possibilities and security. Land control represents a key factor of conflict and development of the nation, and simultaneously defines an important condition of social inequality.

The quest for land has created internal migrations, along with other powerful economic and social factors. Consequently, new areas of the country were colonized

³³ 440,831 square miles

during the second third of the twentieth century, which led to a substantial expansion of the productive and habitable territory of Colombia. Historical studies about internal migration by Andres Etter (2000) have pointed out how this phenomenon was accelerated by higher rates of demographic growth of around 3.5% per annum that were a particular manifestation of the poverty and violence in rural areas. The Eastern plains, North Amazonia, and the Caribbean coast began during this time a slow recognition into the national context. Hitherto, the state presence in rural areas was limited, if it existed at all.

It is necessary at this point to bear in mind that major welfare services, as well as 85% of the capital, were concentrated in the principal cities: namely Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. Other cities such as Barranquilla, Cartagena and Cúcuta, acting as heads of regional, agricultural or political frontiers, increased their population by around 11% per annum. (Asociacion Colombiana para el estudio de la poblacion -ACEP 1974) Most of these cities are concentrated in the Andean mountains, which represent less than 40% of the national territory.

Figure 12. Traditional urban areas, cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants by 1930s © Mapsof.net (modified)

However, without reducing its levels of poverty, on account of rural political violence and high demographic growth, the country engaged in a dramatic urbanization process in the mid-twentieth century, lessening the primacy of Bogotá as the urban centre – although the capital has remained as the biggest city – and generating a better balance between different regions. During the Cold War period, Colombia embarked on a modernization process following international trends.

▪ **Social fragmentation**

Similarly to other countries of the region, during the first half of the twentieth century Colombia was predominantly rural, with vast unexplored areas. Population was rapidly increasing, most of it with low living standards, and a considerable concentration of resources in few hands, preserving the colonial tradition. Associated

with urban-rural tension, there was a wealth-peasant disparity in the country. The extreme inequity and lack of social mobility has been termed the “social gap”.

This social gap reflects the dissimilarity between the facilities and services available to different sectors of the population. This is noticeable from the difference in attention accorded to each region, which had indeed diverse needs and resources. Scholars such as Safford et al. (2002a) have claimed that the pyramidal social structure tends to aggravate social hierarchy through the increasing concentration of resources in a few hands as a result of the incipient process of industrialization, which was widely sponsored by the economic policies.

Though in the early years of the Cold War, Colombia did not itself have a strong communist party, there was a latent preoccupation with Marxist-Leninist influence that later emerged in the Cuban revolution. Initially this influence came either from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, or the Chinese Communist Party, addressing distant regions, and either, struggled sectors of the population or intellectuals. (Miller 1989) State presence in these rural areas became therefore, a concern and a priority for both the national and foreign governments. Later this social and political influence became more consolidated, in particular with the regional engagement of the Communist Party of Cuba to export its revolution to other regions of the American continent. Concerns were focused on the growing labour force, and guerrilla groups began to form in the rural areas, encouraging armed insurrection (c.1964) amongst peasants.

- **Political turmoil**

I will focus on three different political periods that occurred between the 1930s and 1970s: starting with the Liberal Republic, followed by *La Violencia* (the violence) during which the dictatorship of Rojas Pinilla took place, and concluding with a period known as the “National Front”.

- **The Liberal Republic**

Historically, the political scholar José Fernando Ocampo (2008) identifies that Colombia has had a bi-partisan democratic system, composed of Liberals and Conservatives, with timid expressions in the 1960s of a third, the Communist party. The government has been under the control of these parties since its creation in the early nineteenth century. These have grown in constant opposition, creating a political tension that reached such a level of hostility during the early twentieth century that it developed into violence. The first decades of the twentieth century saw Conservative rule with the active participation of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, the Liberals won the elections in 1930, starting a period known as the Liberal Republic. The political transition of power was peaceful. These Liberal governments were characterized by the beginning of what was conceived as “radical” social changes, which in turn caused a greater political polarization among the population. For instance, there was profound antagonism at that time, and in some sectors, to the recognition of women's rights to own property and to have access to education, as well as by agrarian reform, which entitled dispossessed people to own land.

Behind the apparent calmness of public order in the cities, there was violence in the rural areas. Various armed actors directly related to official parties or state forces – and in some cases, even incited by representatives of the church hierarchy – participated in the conflict. Such was the case during the 1940s of Liberal guerrillas and Conservative paramilitaries who fought not only against each other, but also, separately, against the state forces. Even though widely spread in different regions, this conflict was largely ignored in certain sectors of society and territory, essentially because its main impact was in rural areas. In those remote areas common people found themselves in the middle of the conflict and, in order to survive, ended up joining one group or another –either because of the emerging circumstances, or through coercion.

• **La Violencia**

The critical and tense internal situation experienced in Colombia, which was at its worst between 1946 and 1964, was labelled *La Violencia*.³⁴ In political historiography, *La Violencia* is registered as a dramatic conflict emerging from the rural isolation of a vulnerable peasant population that lived amidst extreme conditions, polarization, and illiteracy. This period witnessed macabre expressions of bloodshed, which led to migration towards new colonized areas and, primarily, to the outskirts of principal urban centres. (Uribe 2004)

During this time of social unrest, one popular figure, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán from the Liberal party, led a movement against those whom he called the “oligarchy”, that is “the small, wealthy, educated elite that supposedly ran the government, the church, the army, businesses, everything, including the two traditional parties”. (Bushnell 1993, 198) Due to the confrontation between parties Gaitán was assassinated on April 9th, 1948, while Bogotá was hosting the Ninth Inter-American Conference. As a result, there was a sharp increase in mayhem, which reached its height in 1950, when more than 50,000 political murders occurred. (Palacios et al. 2007, 159) This havoc took place not only in the rural areas, but also made the violence more tangible in urban areas.

The instability brought about by the assassination of Gaitán was assumed to be a determining factor in the coup d’état of 1953. During a crisis of a highly polemic Conservative government, on June 13th General Lieutenant Gustavo Rojas Pinilla assumed power by means of a military coup. The US embassy reported the incident as:

In a surprise move on June 13th, the presidency of the national government of Colombia was assumed by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, who with the support of the military forces and factions of the conservative party, ousted President Laureano Gomez. [...] The change of administration was effected with neither bloodshed nor violence. (USOM 1948-1961)

³⁴ The turn to a Conservative rule 1946-1953 coincides with the beginning of the social unrest.

Military rule was presented as an alternative political force, named “the third force”, in order to restore political equilibrium and pacify the rural areas. The discourse of the regime will be the subject of analysis later on in this thesis. Surprisingly, it was a calm transition and received popular support; in fact, during the first year of the regime violent deaths fell significantly. (Safford et al. 2002a) Immediately after, the *Asamblea Nacional Constituyente* (Constitutional National Assembly) confirmed Rojas as head of state in 1953.

Figure 13. Rojas' speech on taking power speech June 13th, 1953 © El Tiempo

The political agenda of this military dictatorship will be presented in more detail later, but it is worth noting at this point that the regime supported its agenda by implementing economic measures that claimed to maintain financial stability from the coffee bonanza, whilst also balancing the budget through taxes and opposition to monopolies. This was strategically presented as “economic planning and big projects” and as receiving the support of the masses. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953a) This government was indeed to some extent regarded as populist,³⁵ and it would later face opposition from the church, banking and industrial leaders, university students, the press, the international financial agencies, and even a faction of the military forces. Certainly, this growing opposition to the regime was due to some of the economic measures that attempt to benefit popular sectors of society, but especially because of its abuses of force, indoctrination, massive censorship, repression, and corruption.

Tellingly about the contradictory perception of the regime, the historian Marco Palacios, despite being a former student and later rector of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, where the core of the opposition to the regime was concentrated, points out:

Rojas regime was not a military regime in the conventional sense. He did govern in the name of the armed forces, and with the support of the three services, despite his opponents' efforts

³⁵ See further information in (Lopez Sanchez 2006)

towards the end to label him as ‘usurper’ of the military’s authority. (Palacios et al. 2007, 151)

In the beginning, to engineer its positive image, the military regime invested considerable amounts of the national budget and foreign loans in different regions through the “National Plan of Public Works”, which is of central concern in this research. The largest sums were assigned to the construction of infrastructure: primary public education – giving access to this resource to more than 60% of children –, low-cost housing, health centres, road construction, and communication infrastructure; lands were also provided for the displaced population and victims of the recent violence. Most of these programmes and projects were supported by international organizations. In social terms, this government was responsible for consolidating the rights of women as democratic individuals, authorizing their active participation in suffrage and seeking a gender balance in public service appointments.

Figure 14. Image of public manifestations of support for the regime alongside with undergoing “works of progress”, 1953 © DIPE

Conversely, even if these populist policies were a major factor in consolidating Rojas power, there was an increasing repression caused by the application of military force. Political historiography registered this opposite side. One of the most documented references is Wiarda et al. (2001) who argue that, during Rojas dictatorship, there was an active and increasing press censorship, as well as abuses against freedom of assembly, mobilization and expression – especially of students and communists, who were explicitly banned as a political party. The dictatorship controlled all the flows of information through its *Dirección de Información y Propaganda del Estado* (Directorate of Information and State Propaganda). This entity maintained surveillance over what was in the public domain. People were compelled to attend public events and “show support” for the government. As is usual in totalitarian regimes, a significant number of intellectuals were forced into exile. There is no clear information about the number of people who disappeared or were killed by state forces. Nevertheless, these anomalies were also present in previous, and later governments, while most of the public criticism of the regime was focused on corruption. Balanced political historical literature identifies:

The fall of Rojas marked the end of the chapter that had begun in 1930: while [the regime] had promised an expansion in citizens' rights, its ending demonstrated that the real beneficiaries were those members of the oligarchy who had been able to modernize. (Palacios et al. 2007, 134)

The self-enrichment of General Rojas' circle, and the mismanagement of resources, gave credence to the allegations by the International Monetary Fund and Central Bank of Colombia against the regime. In 1956, those institutions forced the devaluation of the national currency, increased import control, and reduced public spending and bank credits. (Safford et al. 2002a; Bethell 1991) The tension between the government and important social groups, such as the church hierarchy, traditional parties, industrial leaders, the media, factions of the military, and university students, finally led to Rojas' peaceful resignation on May 10th, 1957.

A new agreement signed in Spain by the two traditional parties, known as the "Sitges declaration" (1957), was definitive in the resignation of Rojas and the fall of his regime. This agreement proposed that the transition of government would be handled by a "Military Board" for one year, and created a "National Investigative Commission" to look into the crimes committed during Rojas dictatorship. On December 1st of the same year, a plebiscite confirmed some of the regime's policies, including full political equality for women and a minimum of 10% of the national budget to be allocated for education. However, the plebiscite was particularly focused on the equal and alternating representation of both parties in the government.

• **The National Front**

The bi-partisan agreement signed in Sitges to alternate the two parties in power was known as "The National Front", and it lasted from 1958 to 1978. In essence it was a pact among the elite to hold a monopoly on power within the two traditional parties. It facilitated a return to an apparent calmness, the consolidation of economic disparities and legitimization of the acquired rights achieved for each group. However, the pact

denied any possibility of alternative manifestations. Indeed, as the scholar Robert Wesson³⁶ claimed, “most analysts recognized that the bi-partisan arrangement incorporated a series of artificial, anti-majoritarian and anti-democratic elements”. (1984, 125) These years of negotiated calm featured a low rate of democratic participation, strikes by workers, and an increasing political discontent that was manifested, once more, through rural peasant violence, which in turn forced and accelerated internal migration.

The political situation in Colombia between 1930 and 1970 showed some superficial social changes, but it was built on a fragile structure. At the end of the 1960s, the National Congress and the Supreme Court dismissed all the charges against Rojas Pinilla. Afterwards, with the support of the party he promoted, *Alianza Nacional Popular [ANAPO]*, and the labour movement, Rojas put his name forward for democratic election; how truly democratic these elections were has been historically questioned, but he lost by a narrow margin of 3%. Oddly enough, as a consequence of the restlessness of the popular groups supporting the former dictator a socialist guerrilla group emerged. The *Movimiento 19 de abril, M-19* [Guerrilla Movement April 19th] was created “recalling the date in 1970 on which Rojas Pinilla narrowly lost the presidency”. (Bushnell 1993, 245)

1.4. Common discourses

In the post-war era, foreign contacts encouraged an awareness of international discourses of modernization. This led to the commitment, among other things, to the ideas of higher living standards and national-state consolidation in Latin America, where most countries, including Colombia, were beginning a transition from rural to urban society, under the instable conditions already referred to above.

³⁶ Robert Wesson was a distinguished scholar on political sciences, expert on Latin American affairs, who served in the US Foreign Service in Brazil and Colombia.

Here I will present a short account of the principal discourses that had an impact in Colombia at the time. The two confronted ideologies provided different interpretations and approaches to them. These discourses were widely disseminated as part of the active propaganda the super-powers promoted in the region. The sources created little adaptation to address local audiences', hence, they will coincide with currents of thought that can be found elsewhere. What might differ is the interpretation and interest that each of them had within the region, matching the internal politics of each country. The Colombian government, as much as other Latin American ones, and social movements of intellectuals, conveniently merged and adapted these discourses shaping the political and social context, whilst their aspirations were paradoxical. On the one hand, concurrent with the incursion into an international world, nationalist discourses gained ground. On the other, an incipient interest in pre-Columbian roots competed with a modern developmentalist trend. How these discourses were specifically interpreted in the Colombian built environment will be a matter of study in the following Chapters.

• The Nationalist discourse

In Colombia as in the rest of Latin America, the "national project" was not related to any independence process; rather, it was associated with the idea of unity as a centralized policy driven by modern progress.

Even if in other territories nationalist discourses respond to recent independence processes, and are based on ethnic or cultural roots, Latin America observes a different phenomenon, as originally noted by Benedict Anderson.³⁷ Latin Americanists have drawn on his idea of "imagined communities", as a social and political construct. (Anderson 1983) My intention at this stage is to point out how the nationalist discourse was instigated in the international realm. The interpretation of these nationalist ideas during the Rojas regime will be analysed later on.

³⁷ The initial works of this scholar are related to Sudan, Indonesia, and other regions. His contributions to the idea of nationalism have widely supported studies outside the traditional ethnographic definition of collectiveness. *Imagined communities* was first published in 1983, and reedited in 1991 and 2006.

In the introduction to the special issue of *Nations and Nationalism* about Latin America, Monserrat Guibernau (2006) noted how: “sufficient commonalities can be found across Latin America to justify talk of patterns of nation-building, nationalism and political identification which distinguish this region from others”. This echoes Anderson’s argument “that nationalism in the Americas, far from being derivative of European patterns, was in itself a model for developments both in Europe and other parts of the world”. (Miller 2006)

Within the region the first involvement with international affairs parallels the period between the world wars. The preoccupation with the expansion of these conflicts into the American continent was simultaneous with the rise of indigenism. Modern ambitions were, thus, in conflict with the interest of putting forward the uniqueness of the pre-Columbian and indigenous traditions, neglected until then.

Contradictory discourses of Pan-Americanism were also in vogue. In the letter of José Vasconcelos to the Colombian youth, the intellectual and diplomat remarked:

A modern Latin Americanism is different from that of Bolívar, because that was political dream, whereas this one is ethnic. Bolívar wanted a League of American Nations that did not exclude the Northern United States. We want the union of Hispanic people, without excluding Spain, and explicitly encompassing Brazil; and thus, we have to exclude the United States, not due to hatred, but because they represent a different expression of human history. (Vasconcelos 1950)³⁸

Understandably, the United States persisted in the promotion of the discourse derived from Simon Bolívar. Either way, the consolidation of the region was a priority.³⁹

And perhaps one of the US strategies to pursue its inclusion was to support what was presented at the Ninth International Conference of American States. In the

³⁸ Historically, the key and visible role played by Simon Bolívar (1783-1830) in the independence of the Great Colombia (now Colombia, Panamá, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia) from the Spanish Empire, and creation of new nations in the nineteenth century, meant his name and ideas remain as a common reference of democracy in the region.

³⁹ How this discourse shaped the cultural exchange within the American continent has been a recent subject of study by Robert Alexander Gonzalez (2011).

plenary session of speakers on April 6th, 1948, by Parra Velasco, Ecuadorian Foreign Minister, “within the hemisphere both Federation of Latin American countries and *subregional groups* such as Gran Colombia should be promoted” [My emphasis].⁴⁰ This motion was amply seconded, and reaffirmed by delegates of most Latin American countries, during the following days. (US Department of State 1972) In other words, there was a simultaneous encouragement of the cohesion of the whole American continent, and subregional associations, that had an historical precedent in Bolívar.

The flourishing of nationalist sentiment in Latin American countries in the late 1950s, in addition to the ground gained in the 1960s by socialist ideas, reinforced by foreign communist parties, helped to create a greater resistance to the hegemony of the United States in the region, as has been argued by the scholar Nicola Miller. (1989) In the 1970s the democratic spirit of the region experienced a degree of instability as a considerable number of Latin American nations were ruled by dictatorships and internal conflicts, as has been mentioned. Historians such as Robert Wesson have claimed that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) backed some of these military coups as leftist governments represented a threat to the security of the region. The opening of the agency archives of the time, as part of the Historical Review Program, has recently ratified this assertion.⁴¹

▪ Progress and Development

Perhaps a more internationally appealing discourse was about modernity. Modern ideas had strong social concerns such as universal access to services, implying social and political commitments for a more cohesive society. It was Latin America's opportunity to converse with developed countries.

⁴⁰ The Gran Colombia at the beginning of the nineteenth century – i.e. immediately after independence – comprised Colombia, Ecuador, Panamá, and part of Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

⁴¹ The Historical Review Program of the US Central Intelligence Agency has released restricted material of its operations abroad originally created as secret communications or reports. Some of them have been “sanitized” which means that part of the information, such as specific names, dates or locations, are still blocked. Cf. (CIA 1958; Cullather 1994)

Nicola Miller, as a Latin Americanist, argues that the modern paradigm was conveniently shaped to adjust to different political discourses in the region. The adoption of modernist ideas was not monolithic. Singular elements depended on the internal conditions of each country.

As elsewhere, in the modern utopia, development and progress were, thus, almost synonyms of modernity. New living standards were defined not only by improving sanitation, but also alternative social relations. They were materialized through an aesthetic based on abstraction, and efficient technologies in the use of standardized resources.

What emerges is the political interpretation of such development in the context of the Cold War: “security equals development”. (Carothers et al. 1990) This US policy encouraged intervention and cooperation of the military apparatus in other areas, such as the construction of modern facilities, as noted by Felipe Agüero: [T]he military as performing developmental roles: [that were called] civic action programs [...] in which a foreign military must gain the support of civilians. (Schoultz et al. 1994)

This condition adds more elements to consider in what is traditionally considered as development, amidst a regional context of a weak presence of the state. Progress encompassed along with new living standards the idea of stability and control, which was provided in the built environment in urban centres; becoming modern was therefore identified with the idea of becoming “urban”. At the time, Colombia engaged in an accelerated process of urbanization that will be explored later on in this Chapter.

▪ **Political discourse of Rojas Pinilla**

In order to analyse the architecture developed under the Rojas dictatorship, the use of alternative sources such as political history material has been valuable. Some of this material has either only become available recently, or is now recovering relevance as there is a growing interest in the history of the mid-twentieth century.

The public appearances of Rojas Pinilla were quite prolific; his speeches conveyed the political discourse of the regime. But political discourse can be

communicated in other ways too, including through debates, policies and projects. Sometimes that discourse involved the presentation of plans; at other times, it embodied a justification and validation of the regime's intentions.

I trace Rojas Pinilla's discourse through his speeches published by the Directorate of Information and State Propaganda (DIPE). This office produced a number of publications, including compilations of speeches and annual reports. In some cases these publications repeat material among them with some edits. There are four publications concerning speeches, corresponding to the years 1953, 1954, 1955 and 1956.⁴² Notably, the book relating to his final year in power, 1957, was not published originally by DIPE, but compiled years after. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1957) Some of these speeches were recorded for radio or television, but the quality of the recordings sometimes makes it difficult to follow the content. Therefore this project concentrates primarily on the published material, and has also made use of the material recently published online.⁴³

Examining the speeches in sequence, it is possible to identify elements of both change and consistency. On the one hand, one can see transformations in the content and the language over the four years. The initial presentations placed greater emphasis on the denomination of the government as the "Christian and Nationalist movement of June 13th", (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 14-111) recalling the date of the military coup. After the ratification of power by the National Assembly, this denomination becomes gradually absent, and only the first two anniversaries of the date were celebrated. The date is a constant factor, however, in the denomination of various buildings, projects and policies, as we will see in more detail.

Figure 15. National broadcasting of presidential speeches ensuring wider audiences with the use of modern media © BLAA

⁴² The number of speeches and the delivery also changed during the four years in power. In the final years of Rojas Pinilla's regime, there were fewer prepared speeches and more improvised ones – that is, without a formal reading of a set text.

⁴³ The website El libro total during the last years has included an important collection of material from Rojas Pinilla. Although valuable, these transcriptions are not a direct source, nor they cite the original documents. See www.ellibrototal.com

Despite the more secular international discourse, the regime internally acknowledged the “Catholic Church and God as moral guides for the order and dignity of the country”, (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 17) and this emphasis was particularly strong during the first year of government. Even though the religious reference is permanent, a certain distance from the church hierarchy becomes visible later, with more of a focus on popular devotion, as is seen in the denomination of Colombia as the “country of the Sacred Heart”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1955, 220; 1956)

These initial speeches placed Simon Bolivar as a main ideological reference, in particular as regards the unity of the continent under the “Society of Nations of the Americas” as the aim for each state to pursue, generating simultaneously “the intellectual and moral unity of the continent”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 56) Rojas related this ideal of unity to the international policies that were, as we have seen, in fashion in the region: focusing on the American continent as the priority, and stimulating hemispheric relations under the label of Pan- Americanism supported by the United States.

It is also possible to see how the regime was presented in different ways: initially it is presented as the “government of the military forces”; (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 17) later it is given a personal reference as being Rojas Pinilla’s government; then towards the end, the speeches make reference to the “People’s government”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1955, 137) During the second stage an important number of projects were inaugurated, and in consequence some of them were named after the dictator. I would suggest that the final denomination of the government to some extent reflected the socialist trend that was gaining ground in the American continent, and which was a matter of great concern to the US government.

Over the course of the time in power, internal tensions gained more importance in the content of the speeches, particularly in three aspects: the acknowledgement of the press as a powerful force and the need for its censorship; the communist risk in the continent; and the relationships between students and the military government.

Turning now to the elements of consistency, various topics can be seen to have been a permanent feature of the dictator’s speeches. During the time Rojas was in

power, there were continual mentions of mass support – regardless of the fact that this was visibly decreasing. The discourse also made visible the role of women in society, and their rights. It stated an antagonistic position towards the traditional parties and the oligarchy, in order to maintain popular support. There was a constant invitation to national unity and the re-invention of the state. (Rojas Pinilla 1954, 17) This last point is perhaps the most relevant for the formulation of the National Plan of Public Works, as it was permanently related to it. I will expand on this point in Chapter 3.

As the participation of its only frigate, and more than 4,000 Colombian men in the Korean War (from 1951)⁴⁴ were taken as proof of the state's international commitment,⁴⁵ it was continually mentioned by the regime. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 5) Of particular relevance is the case of the first anniversary of the naval force during the regime when, based on the commitment of the naval force as the international representatives in the Korean War, the dictator stressed how the involvement of that force should be internationally recognized, particularly in a country such as Colombia with 3,208 kilometres (1,993 miles) of coastline: 1,760 kilometres (1,100 miles) bordering the Caribbean Sea, and 1,448 kilometres (905 miles) bordering the Pacific Ocean. Rojas emphasized the strategic location of the country:

As the Mediterranean people once [did in history], the Caribbean people have a common destiny in which our geographical position points us as a reference of balance in the progress and harmony in America (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 45)

Most Latin American countries did not publicly acknowledge the influence of the Cold War. Significantly, however, shortly after taking power in 1953,⁴⁶ Rojas did state that the Cold War was an international phenomenon with an impact in the region.

⁴⁴ Reported in the research of the US Marine Corps, Gordon (Rottman 2002)

⁴⁵ That commitment was ratified years later by joining in peacekeeping missions of the United Nations. Since 1956 Colombia has participated in different missions in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Central America.

⁴⁶ Interview with Camilo José Cela, June 27th 1953. New State discourse, August 13th 1953 (237). American [continent] fraternity, October 25th 1953 (481-2). Solidarity against communism, October 25th 1953 (486).

There was, he said, the risk of “impiety and international communism” in the continent. On May 13th, 1954, Rojas stated:

In a world always concerned with the spectre of the war, America shows that is the continent of pacific solutions, and hope. The American solidarity, expressed today in the Colombo- Peruvian agreement, is today more needed than ever with regards to the immense dangers that threaten the Christian civilization with the tumultuous advance of Communism. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 173)

Rojas claimed that, as a response, cooperation agreements between the United States and developing countries, such as Colombia, were necessary in order for those developing countries to receive technical and financial support to enforce democracy and modern development.⁴⁷ According to the information publicly displayed, the priority areas of these international agreements were: health and sanitation, education, industry, and infrastructure and housing. (USOM 1948-1961) Rare references were made to foreign cooperation in terms of state security. Despite acknowledging the growing influence of communism in the region, this was only addressed as an ideological concern, and not as a security issue.

Along with the motto of the regime – “Peace, justice and freedom” – Rojas calls for a “political binomial: military forces and people”, reinforcing the idea that the military forces offered tranquillity and equality. The regime adopted the image of a protectionist state providing “progress for all”, claiming to close the social gap. It was planned to close this gap through the provision of the services and opportunities of the “modern world” through “an ambitious project of works for progress” which would be made possible thanks to international cooperation.⁴⁸ (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953c, 57) Rojas related this progress within a wider scenario:

⁴⁷ Some of them reported in Jorge E. Hardoy, ‘Cooperación internacional para los asentamientos humanos’, / Comercio Exterior / Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior (México), Vol. 32, No. 2 (February 1982), pp. 131-142.

⁴⁸ The National Plan of Public Works and the international cooperation frame will be analysed in the Chapter 4.

These preoccupations of my government for a sincere union and cooperation amongst Colombians [working] towards the progress of the country are framed in the international realm in a firm and honest harmony with all countries, in particular with the ones in this continent, with which we have more immediate obligations for geographic, political, economic, and historic reasons, that will allow us to work together towards the exaltation, and progress of all our people. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 190)

In summary, Rojas took into account the resistance that a totalitarian regime is bound to experience in a traditionally democratic country. Thus the dictator's speeches consistently characterize the government as both transitory and legitimate, portraying the military government as necessary to rebuild the "nation" in order to generate a transformation and reconstruction on three different levels: intellectual, moral, and material.

The regime presents a balance that people appreciate. The will of organizing life in Colombia, leading policies, political orientation, and material works of this Bolivarian, Nationalist and Catholic government. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 5)

Consequently, in order to create a "new state", Rojas presented the Plan of Public Works as the instrument to answer the social problems Colombia had at that time. Despite the traditional interpretation that the political discourse represents an ideology and proposes a vision, it is difficult to identify Rojas' discourse with a particular ideology. It shifts and changes shape according to the expected rationale of the public.

▪ **Facts and figures**

Figure 16. Synthesis of Colombian census data 1930s – 1970s (Average Annual Growth Rate). Based on DANE

Some of the figures of the period are illustrative of the transformation of the country, thus I create this table⁴⁹ based on the censuses published by the *Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística* DANE (Department of National Statistics) between 1928 and 1974, and the information about Colombia in the final report "Population and Urban Change in Latin America, 1850-1989". (Hardoy et al. 1991) The information about the variations in growth of the urban areas related to the inhabitants of capital cities of departments (i.e. administrative regions), which correspond to the political-administrative division of the country during the period of the regime.⁵⁰ This information frames the demographic change in which the Rojas regime operated.

It is noticeable in the information that greater changes occurred during the 1950s; not only did the total population of the country grow at a higher rate (51%), but the urbanizing trend of the previous decade was reinforced, concentrating a bigger population in urban centres, that were more dispersed in the territory. I will identify the phenomenon by identifying cities with higher than 5 as Annual Average Growth Rate (AAGR), which reflects cities that duplicate in ten years their population. In the 1940s, i.e. 1938 and 1951, appeared traditional urban centres as such as Cali (7.0), Medellín (6.84), Bucaramanga (5.84), Bogotá (5.52), closely followed by Barranquilla (5.25). Between 1951 and 1964, almost half of the cities more than doubled their inhabitants: Cali (7.62), Bogotá (7.48), Tunja (7.35), Santa Marta (6.28), Cartagena (6.16), Bucaramanga (6.03), Pereira (5.47), and Medellín (5.24). In the latest period shown, 1964 and 1973, there is a return to lower growth rates, with only Cúcuta (5.27) keeping a higher pace.

Figure 17. Urban extension Cali 1961: almost duplicated area in a decade © OSSO

These numbers could lend credence to what the Rojas' discourse proposed: a more equal development in different regions. As the dictator insisted on this claim: "The

⁴⁹ Find on the Appendix the complete table of censuses of Colombian population including data about inhabitants and growth.

⁵⁰ Colombia adopted the French denomination for the political division of its territory. It is worth noting that this division changed before, during, and after the dictatorship, but for the purposes of this research the information presented here will provide a general understanding about the growing phenomena.

country cannot gravitate exclusively around only one of its regions, its progress should be uniform, balanced and methodical.” (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1956, 46)

The number of projects developed in different regions is also relevant. Remarkably, the higher rates of construction correspond with what was identified by the historian Javier Ocampo (2008).

The political violence worsened between 1948 and 1953, and continued during the 1950s. Guerrillas were organized in the Eastern Plains, and numerous resistance groups emerged in Tolima, Caldas, Valle, Boyacá, Cundinamarca, Santanderes and other regions.

On the map, I have located the number of infrastructural projects reported by the Ministry of Public Works 1954 specifically, to benefit the population of one part of this disaffected region, the coffee-growing area that initially corresponded to the department of Caldas, and during the regime was divided into Caldas, Risaralda, and Quindío.

Figure 18. Map of distribution of projects in coffee-growing area © UNC (modified)

During the four decades the distribution of the rural and urban population changed, but so did the distribution of population in the national territory. In general, urban growth remained, with the increasing concentration of a higher number of inhabitants in the principal cities – namely, Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, and Barranquilla – which jointly moved from 54% to 85% of the urban total. Notably, Bogotá, from containing less than 25% of the national urban population in the 1930s, reached a significant 41% by the 1970s. In terms of regions, the south west of the country had in 1964 a negative rate of migration (-11.5), which means that the population moved to other regions, in particular the western mountains, where new urban centres emerged, adding to the number of urban centres dispersed on the territory. (Asociacion Colombiana para el estudio de la poblacion -ACEP 1974)

In other words, the trend that the country had experienced at the beginning of the twentieth century of a homogeneous growth in different cities and different regions

was disrupted in the 1940s, generating a larger difference between these four cities and the others – though one should include on a second level an incipient development in the 1950s of other cities as Cartagena, Bucaramanga and Manizales, that was finally equalled in the 1960s by Cúcuta, Pereira, and Ibagué. In terms of the national territory this means that, given the concentration of urban population in the centre and the preservation of traditional cities in the northwest, southwest, and north, efforts at maintaining a balance between the rates of progress of different regions failed. However, this account only considers the hard figures of urban growth, and not the social, economic, or political factors that might impact on these numbers.

Given the political, and social conditions of the country, and the international concern with the spread of communism in Latin America, the interest in developing infrastructural projects all around the country is understandable. The transformation of the built environment was heavily politically motivated, rather than just urban expansion. As is clear from the figures, there was a related change in the urbanization process, and the direction of the National Plan of Public Works constitutes a core of this phenomenon of accelerated modernization, at least in the political discourse.

1.5. International interest

According to the political history scholar Howard J. Wiarda, an important precedent to define foreign politics during the Cold War was set during the First World War, when there was evidence that more than 50% of foreign investment in Latin America was British, around 15% was North American, and 10% French. German investment was also rapidly increasing. (Wiarda et al. 2011) These investments were accompanied by trade preferences towards Europe, placing at risk not only the domain of the territory, but also the provision of commodities for the United States.⁵¹

⁵¹ The Great Depression, and later The Second War World, modified both the trade of manufactured goods towards Latin America, and the exportation of industrial raw materials and agricultural products to Europe and the United States. These changes have defined the reliance, almost dependency, of Latin American markets, technology, and financial services on the United States and Europe. (Henderson 2001)

Shortly after the Second World War, the expansion of communism in the most deprived areas of the world created alarm in the US government, and marked a turning point in its relations with what was already considered the “Third World” – that is, the peripheral economies, including Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. As a consequence, US President Harry Truman proposed the *Point Four Program* (1949) to provide international assistance in order to accelerate development with infrastructure projects, demonstrating through them the advantages of a democratic and capitalist system, and thereby reducing the risk of a communist takeover of the territory. (Tucker 2007, 121) And it is relevant to emphasize that in a wider scenario several agreements of mutual security were ratified, comprising not only military aid but also pacts about the provision of resources.

Figure 19. List by region (Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America) of capital cities of countries taking part in the program, ICA telegram, 1961 © NARA

These increasing fears were not related solely to acts of external aggression in the American continent. Deliberations in the US Senate showed that even internal revolutions in Latin America were considered highly threatening for US security. Therefore, some of the debates concerned the inclusion in foreign agreements of the right to intervene, even via armed attack, in those countries benefiting from US cooperation. (US Congress. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 1951)

These foreign agreements were essentially a double-edged sword. National and international interests were entangled. State boundaries and autonomy became compromised in the commitment to modern development. The extent of the influence of this puzzle remains to be fully identified. This research constitutes a first approach to the topic in the Colombian case.

▪ **Technical cooperation**

After the Berlin Blockade (1948-49), the US National Security Council Report – known as NSR 68 – shaped US foreign policy not only in prioritizing military aspects, but also in redirecting US involvement in the consolidation of support and democracy within the Western Hemisphere, i.e. Allies and developing countries. In consequence

alternative means were devised to gain access to and provide support for other countries. One of these forms of international exchange was technical cooperation.

During the early stages of the post-war era, there were milestones in foreign policy that were relevant to developments in technical cooperation. I would mention four of them. First, the Truman doctrine (1947) represents a remarkable initial point, turning the awareness of the United States towards foreign countries in order to secure its own concerns, as a global power. The Mutual Security Act of 1947 recognizes the importance of financial and technical support of foreign governments, backing the strategy laid out in George Kennan's long telegram. This was in turn reinforced by the Marshall Plan (1947) to rebuild Europe through what was then conceived as the beginning of foreign aid programmes, later to be applied to Latin America as part of the Good Neighbour Policy (1933) already mentioned. This did not initially imply technical cooperation itself.⁵² The reinvigorated Inter-American system acquired greater visibility, assuring the hegemony of the United States. (US Mutual Security Program 1951)

In 1961 John F. Kennedy proposed the "Alliance for Progress" as a multilateral agreement to grant assistance, and to stimulate, primarily, social and industrial projects in the Western Hemisphere, in order to consolidate the resistance to the advance of communism in the region. According to Blouet, the ten-year plan, entirely "funded by the United States sought to promote democracy, accelerate development, sponsor agrarian reform, and improve housing, working conditions, education, public health and taxation policies", while encouraging private enterprise and economic preferences. Issues of internal security in the region were toned down despite featuring in the debates in the Congress to approve the agreement. (Blouet et al. 2010, 111)

These international exchanges covered political, economic, and military agreements. Cultural exchanges of around 1950 played an important role in this agenda: cooperation on education, exhibitions, publications, technical advisors, and media information shaped the purposes of mutual security, more specifically exchanges of the inter-American security system. A prominent example of this would be the creation of institutions of architectural research, and construction, such as

⁵² Cf traditional studies of the time about the policy (Wood 1961), (Wood 1985), (Green 1971), (Steward 1975), (Steward 1980)

Centro Interamericano de Vivienda CINVA (Inter-American Centre of Housing) in Bogotá.

Though most visible, diverse, and relevant, the USA was not alone in its enterprise of cooperation. Notably Germany and France commissioned a number of experts, such as Joseph Louis Lebreton about whom we will hear more in Chapter 3.

• Foreign relations in the region

Wesson asserts that the 45 years of the Cold War represented the period of greatest influence of the US government in Latin America. (Wesson 1984) However, as also happened in other regions, the name of the latent conflict was hardly ever mentioned publicly. Nevertheless, the threat of communist influence in the region was fundamental for the Rio Pact of 1947, also known as “the Inter-American conference for the maintenance of continental peace and security”.⁵³ Endorsing this multilateral agreement to prevent the presence of communism in the American continent became the main role of the Organization of American States (OAS) and later other institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank. The US government was suspicious of every leftist idea, programme or policy. The third article of the Rio Pact reads:

The high contracting parties agree that an armed attack by any state against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States and consequently each one of the said contracting parties undertakes to assist in meeting the attack in the exercise of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence. (OAS Department of International Law 1947)

In March 22th, 1948, the US Secretary of State disseminated among its officers the paper no. 26, entitled: “To establish US policy regarding anti-Communist measures which could be planned and carried out within the Inter-American System.” Perhaps the most complete account of the Inter-American policy in terms of the latent tension of

⁵³ A detailed information about internal documents of the US relations in Latin America can be found in (Tusk 1977)

the Cold War can be found in the Resolution XXXII adopted by the Ninth International Conference of American States held in Bogotá (also in 1948) about the Preservation and Defence of Democracy in the American continent. (USOM 1961) It is worth noting that this was the conference held during the mayhem of violence after the assassination of the popular candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. I include here relevant parts of the document, which starts with the considerations:

In order to safeguard peace and maintain mutual respect among states, the present situation of the world demands that urgent measures be taken to proscribe tactics of totalitarian domination that are inconsistent with the tradition of the countries of America, and prevent agents at the service of international communism or of any totalitarian doctrine from seeking to distort the true and the free will of the peoples of this continent;

The declaration goes on to identify international communism as anti-democratic, and against individual freedom and the sovereignty of nations. Portraying democracy as universal access to modernity, as the declaration asserted, through it:

[T]hey shall achieve social justice, by offering to all increasingly broader opportunities to enjoy the spiritual and material benefits that are the guarantee of civilization and the heritage of humanity.

The resolution presumes complete Pan-American unity, whilst establishing a distance with external countries to the region, condemning “[the] interference by any foreign power, or by any political organization serving the interests of a foreign power”.

Concluding with four resolutions that defined the Inter-American system of mutual support, that as we will see have a direct relationship with the development policies embraced in Latin America:

1. To reaffirm their decision to maintain and further an effective social and economic policy for *the purpose of raising the standard of living of their peoples*; [as] a guarantee of the essential freedoms and rights of the individual [...]

2. To condemn the methods of every system tending to suppress political and civil rights and liberties, and in particular the action of international communism or any totalitarian doctrine.

3. To adopt [...] the measures necessary to eradicate and prevent activities directed, assisted, or instigated by foreign governments, organizations, or individuals [...]

4. To proceed with a full exchange of information [...] American libraries and cooperative cultural institutes should not become involved in internal political affairs in the other American Republics. *Their influence will be anti-Communist* if they carry out their normal functions efficiently. Radio, press, and motion picture-programs should be reviewed to determine their effectiveness as measures to combat Communism. [My emphasis]

Inter-American relations were central in the early years of the Cold War. During the 1960s and 1970s political relations of Latin America were the focus of concern, and intense debates were held in order to define the US action towards this region. It is notable that political literature relating to the Cold War and Latin America or Colombia was extensively published in the United States at that time,⁵⁴ but it has since become virtually non-existent. As mentioned earlier, there has been recent interest about this connection concentrated either in Latin American institutes or in Cold War centres of study, but this is focused on economic aspects, their connection with the production of the built environment is a fertile terrain of exploration.⁵⁵

• US foreign policy: mutual security

⁵⁴ Some studies received great acceptance in diplomatic circles: (Wagner 1970), (Green 1970).

⁵⁵ Scholarly works in the area show a rapid increase. See (Bethell et al. 1997), (Franco 2002), (Westad 2005), (Joseph et al. 2008), (Crandall 2008), (Harmer 2011)

In order to support the US foreign policy, different administrative structures and resources were crafted. New dependencies were created in order to facilitate the flow of information and make more operative the system of technical aid. Although a more complete study is necessary, this is an attempt to map the dependencies and programs I found related to the US cooperation with Colombia:

Figure 20. Scheme of the US cooperation system intertwined with security concerns © MPSB

In addition to the US official budget assigned for cooperation, it is now a matter of record that foreign policies also received the financial support of what were known as “reptile funds”, i.e. a flow of resources for covert operations. (Westad 2005) However, no information has been obtained, so far, regarding the use of these funds in the Colombian case.

Colombian governments cooperated extensively with the United States. Solmirano notes how “Under the Mutual Security Act 1951 the country became one of the main recipients of United States military assistance.” (2007, 457) This alliance helped to develop some of the most crucial plans for the region, and simultaneously backed the internal policies of development such as the National Plan of Public Works. However, this aid was clearly related to concerns about the security of the region, though it was portrayed differently at the national level. (Carnoy 1962)

Agreements of mutual protection were not confined to Latin America, but related to the entire Western Hemisphere. The US Congress approved the first one in 1951, in order to grant resources to pair military assistance with technical cooperation. (US Department of State 1952)

Framed in cooperation agreements for mutual security, projects of warfare equated with welfare ones. Cooperation projects were conveniently presented under a principle that the US ambassador Beaulac portrayed as: “the welfare of one country is dependent upon and derived from the welfare of other countries”. (USOM 1961) More than preventative and strategic measures, economic cooperation was widely presented as generous US diplomacy. This simultaneity between warfare and welfare brings new

light to the understanding of cooperation projects. The complexity of this intertwining requires an exploration into how policymaking and power relationships operated during the Cold War, as we will see in Chapter 2.

▪ **Colombian foreign contacts**

From the late 1920s Colombia gained international visibility on account of the issues surrounding the Panamá Canal and the coffee trade. And from the late 1940s, this Latin American country received further attention as findings of mineral and natural resources in different regions provided evidence of rich reserves in its territory. Unlike other Latin American countries, Colombia did not pursue a national management of the exploration and exploitation of national resources. Countries including Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union showed an interest and participated in cooperative exploration projects, and offered technical assistance for the exploitation of these highly valued resources. (Bushnell 1993) It is also relevant to point out that Colombia was prompt in keeping strategic materials flowing exclusively to Allied governments, and particularly to the United States. Indeed, during this period, the nation signed agreements relating to the exploitation and export of relevant natural resources that are still in force. (Westad 2005)

The United States have been the major recipient of a wide variety of Colombian raw materials, partly on account of commitments contained in bilateral agreements. Strategic minerals in the post-war era, such as coal, oil, uranium, gold, iron and nonferrous ores, were subject to US exploration and exploitation. (USOM 1961) In terms of agricultural and food security, there is also a relevant commitment to maintain the provision of rubber, coffee, palm, and sugar cane. The country was the scenario for several pilot projects that aimed to increase production. (Coleman 2008) The dependency on the United States as the primary market conditioned the relation even further, and, at the time, allowed the direct involvement of US companies in developing projects and infrastructure to facilitate such exploitation.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Factories and housing projects were undertaken in distant regions. Such is the case of Tropical oil company.

As Rojas states in the speech to welcome Henry F. Holland, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, October 8th, 1954, the aim was: “to coordinate the collective efforts of the hemisphere in order to avoid the risk of communism with its tremendous spiritual and material threats.” (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 67)

Rojas regime closely cooperated with the United States during his first year in power. However, tensions arose towards the end of his second year in power on account of his social policies, and these defined a distance, as they were regarded as close to socialist politics. At the point that the internal communications of the USOM in Colombia considered “whether the vast wheels of ICA can be stopped”. (USOM 1948-1961)

At the end of the 1950s, in terms of foreign policy, Colombia had re-established all its international relations,⁵⁷ and participated actively in the Organization of American States (OAS). The Colombian demand for multilateral negotiations in hemispheric affairs, rather than direct imposition of US policy, was persistent, and not well received by that government.⁵⁸

The significant pre-eminence of the northern neighbour was becoming a source of resentment, particularly amongst what Nicola Miller (1999) calls the illustrated community – that is, certain isolated groups of intellectuals and scholars. This created some tension in the relationship, as the US government had historically expected unconditional support regardless of the local impact, as noted early on by the US political historian Walter M. Daniels:

North Americans have, not surprisingly, shown little restraint against the temptation to exploit their Latin neighbours in business dealings. Transportation and public services and extractive industries, financed with United States capital, have

⁵⁷ During the 1970s Colombia ceased relations with Cuba and Nicaragua as a response to alleged support for the guerrillas.

⁵⁸ After the initiative of Colombia and Peru, Cuba was excluded from OAS and the Inter-American system at the conference of Punta del Este in 1962.

too often been conducted primarily for the enrichment of the investors (Daniels 1952, 4).

As Alan Gilbert has mentioned, Latin American countries – and in particular Colombia, I would add – have been extremely tolerant and almost passive towards the situation. This Latin Americanist claims, “perhaps the explanation is that survival has been so difficult for the poor, that they have been too busy to protest. [...] Busy lives leave little time for political protest which only occurs when significant events trigger a popular reaction.” (Blouet et al. 2010, 192) This reference still captures the inertia of Latin American countries in face of a dominant neighbour.

On the one hand, the political stability achieved with the National Front agreement nominally facilitated the internal political situation, but did not develop a clear position of the country in terms of foreign policy. And on the other, the escalating internal conflict with guerrilla groups was predominant in vast rural areas containing natural and mineral resources. Colombia became increasingly concerned with its social struggle without showing relevant evolution in the situation. These conditions made the country both irrelevant and unreliable, for international policies and foreign agreements. Therefore it basically disappeared from the Latin American political scene from the 1970s, when other countries were under strong dictatorships that attracted all the attention.⁵⁹

▪ Architectural exchanges

The technical cooperation projects influenced on the development of the built environment. Nevertheless, their impact was much more complex than a direct involvement in mere constructions. A memorandum from R. R. Rubottom Jr., the Second Secretary of the US Embassy in Colombia, to the Secretary of State is illustrative on this regard:

[T]he Department is requested to inform the Embassy whether the peso funds might be used, in part, for such a cultural

⁵⁹ During the 1980s international concerns were focused on the production of marijuana and cocaine, which are perhaps the most common and reductive references of the country in the mainstream.

program, or whether the entire amount would have to be allotted to the foreign buildings program. (US Department of State 1972)

Official forms of cultural exchanges “envisaging the new” took place through the mobilization of different resources including consultants, exhibitions, visiting professors, publications, radio and animated picture programs. The US Operations Mission (USOM) was pivotal in coordinating these interactions, which were mainly unidirectional from the United States towards Latin America. The office in Colombia undertook prominent activity in the region. However, it was not the only channel. In terms of architectural exchanges the scenario has more elements in play, as we will see in Chapter 5.

As in the rest of the world, the adoption of modern architecture in Latin America was a long process during the twentieth century. Scholarly literature has highlighted some well-known precedents of governmental policies in the construction of outstanding modern projects in the case of Latin American architecture, particularly in Brazil with the creation of the new capital in Brasília, and in México with the design of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México UNAM* (Mexican National University). Remarkably these state projects followed a different policy from the one adopted in other regions including Colombia: “Brazilians built Brazil.” That is, the modern image pursued by the Brazilian government prioritized the participation of Brazilians. Tellingly, the motto of Juscelino Kubitschek (in power 1956-1961) exposes a different understanding of this process of building modernity.⁶⁰

The majority of Latin American cities have been built in modern times; modern architecture has thus been taken as the natural manifestation of the process of urbanization. Despite the fact that vast areas of these cities have a modern built environment, this is hardly ever regarded as of any worth. The modern utopia has been confronted with deep-rooted social problems and vast extents of land. In this sense, the cultural historian Jorge Larraín (1996) has claimed that Latin America has experienced modernity without modernization.

⁶⁰ It is worth mentioning here the work of Fernando Luiz Lara about what he denotes as the popularity of modernity in Brazil. See (Lara 2008)

- **Cultural diffusionism**

Human creations such as artefacts have conveyed different purposes. After the Second World War, Cyril Connolly coined in a newspaper article what was considered “cultural diffusionism”, identifying, along with other intellectuals, such as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and George Orwell, the phenomenon of the political use of cultural manifestations. (Goodden 2007)

During the Cold War, governments heavily invested in and supported cultural activity, including architecture, as these were relevant parts of the war of ideas. This generated what Patrick Deer calls “a war culture boom”.

It reached into state-sponsored cinema, documentaries, and radio comedy; promoted official poetry and reportage, art, music, drama; and drew on the futuristic tropes of air power, mechanized warfare, and the wizard war of technocratic boffins that produce radars... code breaking... on the terrain of culture, it seemed, every available resource could be looted and pillaged by the wartime state. (Deer 2009, 3)

According with what we have seen as part of the international discourses, Western states were promoting a nationalist discourse of stability, reconstruction and development.⁶¹ Consequently, Deer affirms that in the post-war period, governments invested in identifying and defining what was appropriate as social and cultural manifestations. Such cultural diffusionism of the state, promoting an image of calm stability, could be understood at its more superficial level as an effort to manipulate language, artefacts and expressions but, in the end, the final goal is a manipulation of memory and identity. And it is here that camouflage tactics acquire particular value.

⁶¹ During the last decade a number of researches, exhibitions and publications have addressed these issues of the Cold War and its impact in modern architecture and design. Emerging mainly in a European context, and focusing their attention on its immediate and more noticeable aspects, they have traced relevant connections with schools, trends, and social transformations. See (Fraser et al. 2007), (Castillo 2010), and (Crowley et al. 2008)

Figure 21. Workshop at Inter-American Housing Centre, part of the cultural and technical exchanges © RAC

Expressions of international affairs were recorded not only in the local media but also in international newspapers, acknowledging the use of foreign policies towards other countries of the Americas. During the Cold War, the use of the official representation and interpretation of “white, and black” propaganda,⁶² speeches, censorship, films, press, radio, manuals, sponsored artists, control of resources, and so on, was particularly notorious amongst contending paradigms. Different states aimed to manipulate language and expression; this implied a huge importance and intervention in cultural activities. There was a widely disseminated official version, and this reduced the possibilities of developing dissident voices and expressions though these too were often camouflaged.⁶³ Resistance, if it occurred, took diverse forms that will be discussed in Chapter 7.

1.6. Modernity without modernization

The experience of modernity in Latin America is a recent subject of academic interest, especially in social and cultural studies. In 2005 at the Institute for the Study of the Americas in London, an interdisciplinary event co-ordinated by Stephen Hart and Nicola Miller questioned when, if ever, Latin America had become modern; this in turn led to more questions due to the complexity and diversity of the countries under discussion. “Scholars [Latin Americanists] from different disciplines (and, indeed, within each discipline) have taken widely varying positions on fundamental issues such as the

⁶² In this respect I have found two different interpretations of the denomination as white, grey and black propaganda. The first one depends on how explicit is the origin of the information; (US Department of the Army. Headquarters 1979) and the second, on how favourable or unfavourable the information it disseminates. (US Department of the Army. Psychological Operations Group 7th. et al. 1969)

⁶³ Alternative means of resistance towards the manipulation of information occurred at the time. For instance, in literature, writers “in the shadow”, or even in exile, challenged dominant narratives and mental landscapes projected in the mass media. One relevant example of this is what has been called in Latin America ‘*Novela de dictador*’ (Dictator’s novel) referring to writing under siege, where people with a background, or practice, in traditional journalism turned to literature in search of narratives that would allow them to present their point of view. Other artists had to find ways to subvert, and resist, the imposed order through humour, lyrics, personal diaries, and ephemera. Even in the most traditional media it was possible to find humour as an alternative critique, which was usually less censored. Strategies were no longer merely military; camouflage was at the core of everyday life.

chronology of modernity, its character, and its agents.” Miller et al. (2007) In addition to this initial point, other enquiries informed the debate – in particular, the question of what modernity meant in Latin America, as well as the conditions of place and context in which these nations achieved some sort of modernity.⁶⁴

As this event demonstrated, the modernity in Latin America represents fragmentation and difficulty of consensus, which may reflect not only divergence about the acceptance of the purpose and implications of modernity, but also the inconsistency of its project, its discourse, and its experience elsewhere – what Garcia Canclini identifies as “the contradiction between, on the one hand, an exuberant cultural modernism and, on the other, a deficient modernization”. (Miller et al. 2007, 177)

In fact, Octavio Paz has interpreted the dichotomy between the modern project and the expected agency of the modernization as a “pseudo-modernity”. According to him, such pseudo-modernity was just an apparent image failing to achieve the modern ideals of an egalitarian, secular, universal, and rational progress. In addition to this central dichotomy between discourse and experience, the question about modernity in Latin America addressed points common to different disciplines about the convenience of thinking in terms not only of temporality but also of spatiality, where there is still some debate about whether there is a process of adoption, imposition, or interpretation, and the role of particular agents, such as governments and intellectuals – among them, built environment professionals.

Drawing from views presented in different collaborations, from diverse countries, I suggest that in Colombia, as well as others in the region, it is possible to identify three different referents in the modernization process: the European enlightenment, the Soviet construction of the nation-state, and the global modernization firmly led by the United States. Nestor Garcia Canclini has drawn attention to the displacement of Europe by the United States as the paradigm of modernity,⁶⁵ which may explain the blurred boundaries of what is conceived as modern in Latin America – what he has coined “cultural hybridization”. An emancipatory ideal

⁶⁴ Further discussions on modernism, modernity, and modernization can be found in (Schnaiberg 1970), (Berman 1982), (Friedman 2001), (García Canclini et al. 2005)

⁶⁵ Constantly alluding to the political implication of this asymmetrical relation of power

underlying the diverse, uneven and hybrid modernities found in Latin America informed processes of identity construction during the twentieth century. This ideal in turn requires new perspectives of analysis, especially considering that, paradoxically, “Latin America displays an overall bias toward modernity”, as has been pointed out by Lawrence Whitehead. (Miller et al. 2007, 198) This topic will be further explored in Chapter 7.

▪ **Incipient modernity**

In the specific case of Colombia the process of global awareness and modernization has relevant precedents that existed well before the Rojas dictatorship. Perhaps as a reaction to the repressive years of conservative governments at the beginning of twentieth century, during the Liberal Republic (1930-1946), the country embraced ideas of progress and development. These ideas were in vogue in the international context as a consequence of the devastation engendered by the World Wars. Even though they had different motivations, the principle was the same: the generation of a new society where new paradigms and references were necessary. As a result, what was considered as traditional was degraded and discouraged. Similarly to other regions, Colombia was then caught between a lethargic past and a promising progressive future. The early encounter with modern ideas was plagued by hesitation and polemic.⁶⁶ The country was in contact with and well aware of global phenomena, but it was dealing with its own complexities.

The international economic crisis of the post-war era affected local communities, creating a fertile terrain in traditionally rural countries for the introduction of political change. Social changes were initially promoted by Latin America’s liberal governments, and later adopted by the military government. Nevertheless, these social concerns were categorized by opposition sectors as “communist and atheist”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953c, 27) In a predominantly Catholic country, where the church held considerable social and political power, embracing new paradigms was challenging.

⁶⁶ Conservative groups discouraged most modern ideas. Nevertheless, during the conservative regime 1946-1953 the modernization process continued.

The ideal society aimed at transforming the social structure. Literary and artistic work incorporated new subjects, techniques and references of everyday life and ethnic roots, creating a distance from traditional academicism, and increasingly achieving the abstraction of its contents to the extent of social utopia. (Saldarriaga Roa 1986) The permanent interaction with foreign influences facilitated the change of paradigms, where the United States and Western Europe were the most solid references of innovation and evolution.

It is possible to identify that such incipient manifestations of modernity were concentrated in Bogotá, and elite groups of other middle-size cities. Modernity began as a central-periphery or top-down venture. The modern crusade was highly encouraged by the media, and in reduced power circles. Becoming modern was paired with becoming urban and international.

Figure 22. Press article encouraging modernization to resemble the United States
© Cromos

New living standards were promptly promoted as elements of progress and status, and facilitated the massive demand of urbanization, which was accompanied by rationalization and standardization. However, the modern projects remained as an elite ambition and eventually as a space of experimentation.

▪ Reaching modernity in architecture

In terms of the built environment, although there are manifestations of early modernism,⁶⁷ 1936 has traditionally been identified as the determinant year for the adoption of the modern movement in Colombia.⁶⁸ Traditional architectural historians in Colombia, as Alberto Saldarriaga Roa (1986) mentioned that this year encompasses the confluence of three important events: the opening of the School of Architecture of

⁶⁷ The beginning of the twentieth century and modernizing ideas that aimed to break with the Spanish colonial tradition are denoted in architecture by the incorporation of new languages such as *art nouveau* and *deco*, that is commonly known as the transition period. Further information is well documented in (Corradine Angulo et al. 2001), (Silvia Arango 1996), (Saldarriaga Roa 2006),

⁶⁸ Further information can be found in: (Téllez Castañeda 1998), (Saldarriaga Roa 1984), (Corradine Angulo et al. 2001), (Silvia Arango 1989).

the Universidad Nacional, the creation of the Colombian Society of Architects, and the beginning of the publication of the *Proa* journal. Actors, places and instruments complete the context of the change of paradigms.

The Universidad Nacional de Colombia recognized the importance of the discipline and as a result created an independent programme of bachelor studies in architecture, being the first at national level and a pioneer in Latin America. The space opened a training – still linked with civil engineering – under the discourse of the new rationalized tendencies incorporated by Colombians who had studied in the United States and Europe, and foreign architects, some of whom had come into the country⁶⁹ to work with the Ministry of Public Works. For almost 20 years the National University represented the only possibility of education in architecture in the country. During the 1950s other programmes were created in private universities, most of which received international support: Bolivariana, Los Andes, Javeriana, Gran Colombia and America. The larger number of educational centres led to a considerable increase in the number of professionals in the country.

The newly developed society was enthusiastically promoted as ideal by academia, placing special relevance on comfort, hygiene, and economy of resources. However, every change requires time. One can see that projects developed by architects and engineers in the 1930s and 1940s answered to diverse languages, in which eclecticism, inconsistency and slow incorporation of new techniques were the predominant note.

It was the *Proa* journal, led by Carlos Martínez Jiménez, an architect trained in France,⁷⁰ which not only played a crucial role disseminating the postulates of the modern movement, but also validating projects that followed these postulates, and therefore were worth of appreciation. Later on, the Colombian Society of Architects, in an attempt to enhance the profession through awards and public contests, honoured projects that maintained the principles of the modern movement. Whereas *Proa* is an invaluable source of information still accessible today in main libraries, the Society of

⁶⁹ An incipient research has start tracing back precedents of the migration. Showing that some of the immigrants came after either, being members of the Schutzstaffel, or fleeing Nazi persecution. Cf (Oyuela-Caycedo 2012)

⁷⁰ Detailed information about Martínez and *Proa* journal can be found in Hugo Mondragón (2003)

Architects does not keep records for more than ten years, constituting an important loss of memory for the country.

Despite the instability of national policies and financial struggles, an important supporter of the modern movement was the Ministry of Public Works. For more than 60 years this governmental entity was the most active constructor nationwide as well as an active promoter of the state architecture:

It is within this perspective that public buildings are understood, not only as ideological elements and functional placement of the administration, but also as educative factors, and transmitters of ethical and cultural values, which are part of the historical project and the formation of a nation. (Niño Murcia 1991, 15)

The consolidation of the practice of architecture was conducive to the establishment of firms and studios, some of which are still active. Among these are: Cuellar Serrano Gomez; Pizano Pradilla Caro; Lago Saenz; Obregón & Valenzuela; Samuel Vieco; Guillermo Bermudez; Fernando Martínez Sanabria; Alvaro Ortega; Gabriel Solano; Borrero Zamorano Giovanelli; Leopoldo Rother; Bruno Violi; Jorge Gaitán Cortes; Hernando Vargas Rubiano; Guillermo Herrera Carrizosa; Vicente Nasi; Juvenal Moya; Esguerra Sáenz Urdaneta y Samper.

These professionals were primarily active in the main cities of the country. The considerable and rapid rise of population in the cities challenged the incipient significance of urban planning in Colombia. As a consequence, following the CIAM postulates, the Ministry of Public Works led programmes with some of these firms to promote the development of middle-size cities in different regions taking as reference the proposals of international experts, such as Le Corbusier, who was invited for the formulation of the Pilot Plan for Bogotá (1947-50), and later on, and Wiener & Sert the Bogotá Master Plan (1950-53), and other middle-sized cities.⁷¹

⁷¹ Detailed information about the Master and Regulatory plan of Bogotá has been recently published by the research group architecture and city of Los Andes university (O'Byrne et al. 2010)

Figure 23. Le Corbusier pilot plan for Bogota: mainly focused on the traditional centre, preservation of rivers, and road network © FLC-ADAGP

From the 1950s, and 1960s the country changed focus towards urbanization, with the major concentration of population in cities such as Cali, Barranquilla and Medellín, which have an industrial character, followed by Bucaramanga, Cartagena, Manizales, Cúcuta and Pereira that have historical and regional relevance as post of trading centres.

Figure 24. Colombian main cities (more than 100,000 inhabitants) in 1973 © Mapsof.net (modified)

As usual, the advent of a new social paradigm is a result of different concepts or ideals that should be promoted by active actors of the national life with the possibility of affecting the conditions of the collective. In Colombia the role of the state was a key factor in the incorporation of modern architecture. The elite sector was more receptive to the changes resulting from progress and development, which were associated with an urban status. With the 1950s, simultaneously with the construction of public buildings, massive dwelling programmes were promoted to satisfy the increased demand in the cities for a new urban/rural distribution of the population.

1.7. Dichotomy: reality and representation

Even though Colombia's image is commonly related to the pre-Hispanic and colonial, or to violence and drugs, the mid-twentieth century is crucial in its fragmented history. Nevertheless, its complexity brings elements of discussion, where the absence of clear and explicit ideologies is a latent condition. Short-term perspectives, around the particular objectives of each region or group, have driven its historical development with an endemic absence of the state, and a permanent social exclusion. As the historian Bushnell (1993) states: "Colombia is a nation in spite of itself." Discussing the complexity of this country in the mid-twentieth century represents a huge challenge, particularly on account of the inherent polarization that has spanned a considerable part of its history.

It is possible to say that during the Cold War US interventions not only in regional but also in the internal politics of Latin American countries were at their highest point. Distance, or even attempts to act independently in the region, were considered a high risk, and raised fears of communist dominance. The US government defined the level of “friendliness” of each government – or, in other words, the level of support or hostility each country could expect. In response to these unequal and some say imperial relations, (Wiarda et al. 2011) it is not unusual to find anti-US sentiments in Latin America,⁷² that might well interfere in the interpretation of the consequences of its relationships and exchanges with the United States.

The complex national context, as well as the tense international one, brings us a frame of reference to locate confluences that were materialized in the built environment.

Looking in detail at how this process played out in Colombia, we will see that the adoption of modern architecture nationwide accelerated in the 1950s. Amidst probably the most difficult turmoil in the country’s history, Rojas insisted in his speeches that the aim of his government was to create “progress for all”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953a, 57) The regime adopted a paternalistic state image by presenting itself as providing the services necessary for modernizing the country through infrastructural projects, which were collectively described by the Minister of Public Works, Admiral Ruben Piedrahita Arango, as “an ambitious project of works for progress”. (Piedrahita 1955) This was the National Plan of Public Works and it was a crucial part of the government’s efforts to maintain the image of the welfare state. However, awareness of how it also implied considerations of warfare makes the understanding of the transformation of the built environment more challenging.

⁷² Detailed information can be found in (McPherson 2003), (McPherson 2006),

2. Misrepresentation of the political agenda

The representation of a political period in terms of architecture demands an understanding not only of the historical context of the country and the region, but also of the different constructs of power, and strategies that were in use at that time. The historical context of the Cold War gives us certain specific conditions that must be taken into consideration, as they shaped the resulting built environment. Through research into the socio-political conditions of Colombia, but particularly through the archival material available concerning the architectural projects of the dictatorship and its interpretation in historiography, the information turns out not only to be fragmented and polarized, but usually contradictory. In an effort to understand a more comprehensive picture of what is confusing at first sight, it has been necessary to explore different approaches to the notion of power; that is, to understand its operation in the politics of the time, and its impact in the transformation of the built environment.

In order to question the rationale of the numerous infrastructural projects undertaken by the Rojas regime, the information made available by the government needs to be re-visited and interpreted on different levels. That information is neither consistent nor coherent: it seems to have less content than one might expect from a dictatorship that claimed to enjoy public support. As drawn from the regime's discourse, the agenda of the military government was unclear, and archival material refers more frequently to immediate, internal concerns than to a wider picture. Moreover, the architectural representation of these state projects follows no apparent logic. To help make sense of this shifting ground, I have explored different forms of power, and strategies in use during the Cold War in order to contextualize the development of infrastructural projects in Colombia.

Figure 25. Accelerated construction of architectural and engineering projects:
Chapel Gimnasio Moderno School © Orduz

2.1. Architectural apparatus

Within architectural studies, Jonathan Hill (1990) questioned the autonomy of architecture and its role in the formulation of ideologies. Hill argued that within the discipline of architecture it has traditionally been “inconvenient” to place in evidence, or even to inquire about, the political implication of the built environment.

Architecture’s status as an ideological apparatus is discussed outside the discipline in subject areas closely related to architecture. It is not usual for the criticism of the ideological relations of a cultural discipline to be absent from the discipline itself. (Hill 1990, 74)

Indeed, developments regarding this relation between space and power in the field of architecture are more recent in comparison to those from other social sciences. Fortunately this has been changing in recent decades, the relation between architecture and power becoming a subject of concern and debate within the discipline.⁷³ Nevertheless, in Latin America preoccupations are still raised about its “inconvenience”.⁷⁴ This research not only aims to contradict that assumption by opening up new territories, but also attempts to challenge existing understanding about how this power is materialized.

The interpretation of space in other recent studies is mediated by the recreation of different relations and traces, which it is worth mentioning once more are not all visible; given the dynamic connotation of the production of space adds more complexity. Interestingly, Kim Dovey argues that the relative invisibility makes the built form even more powerful, “the more that structures and representations of power can

⁷³ The rapidly growing interest in the subject would not allow for a comprehensive account of the scholarly production, but perhaps some of the most recurrent references are Barbara Miller Lane (1985), who in 1968 coined the contradictions on the critique and later adoption of the modern movement in Nazi Germany (and the manipulation of its core social postulates). Thomas Markus (1993) whose main assertion is that “In space, relations of power are ever-present.” Paul Jaskot (2001) traces relations of architecture with social and economic facts, generating a direct connection with two concepts already mentioned: power and representation. Kim Dovey (1999), who claims that the built environment acts as a stabilizer for its own characteristics, making it invisible and, therefore, more powerful.

⁷⁴ Although with a very limited dissemination, recent studies have addressed the relation between power and architecture in Latin America, mainly in Argentina: Ballent (2005), (Giunta 2005), (Andermann et al. 2005), and more indirectly (Liernur 2004) y (Gorelik 2012).

be embedded in the framework of everyday life, the less questionable they become, and the more effectively they can work.” (Dovey 1999, 2) It draws on Bourdieu, who terms this phenomenon a “complicitous silence” where habitus legitimizes the ideological discourse when it remains hidden in the space. (1977, 188)

Dovey elaborates another aspect, which could also be connected with Bourdieu;⁷⁵ he claims that there is a “complex dialectic whereby overt expressions of power in space tend towards an inverse relation to the security of that power”. In other words, in the rush to legitimize certain agents of power, they urge the materialization of projects in direct proportion with the vulnerability of that power. Agents of power appear to have identified the “capacity of buildings to symbolize a 'grounding' of authority in landscape and nature [which] means that architecture is regularly called on to legitimize power in crisis”. (Dovey 1999, 14) This well might be the case with the Colombian dictatorship.

▪ Different constructs of power

Bearing in mind that every interpretation of the concept of power may be partial, and not necessarily applicable to every case and subject, I have followed previous studies regarding the relation of architecture and power to find the references that most commonly inform them. This has given me the opportunity to explore other areas and disciplines, which create – either directly or indirectly – connections with my subject of research. Most of these studies are built on French philosophy, and largely focus on the traditional and explicit manifestations of power.

When talking about power, perhaps the most common reference among them is the French philosopher Michael Foucault (1995), particularly in *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, published originally in 1975, and referring to Bentham’s panopticon, as the quintessential materialization of his notion of power. This French philosopher conceives power as a means of domination, which fundamentally implies

⁷⁵ To analyse how places materialize and reflect interests Dovey combines parts of what he calls three intellectual paradigms: space syntax (social logic), discourse analysis (representation) and phenomenology (experience).

the coercion caused by the idea of surveillance: forcing individuals into discipline.⁷⁶ There is an explicit idea of control over the other. Foucault admits at a certain point, however, “power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms.” (Foucault et al. 1980, 86)

Trying to find other references on this balance with non-explicit control, I considered other contemporary perspectives, less diffused in the architectural realm; some of them are complementary and some contradictory to Foucault's work. Perhaps one of the most relevant is Michel de Certeau's (1984) contribution is the idea of “silent histories”, that is, tactical ruses to make more bearable and effective the power exerted.

On the one hand, in the conception of power, this philosopher considers either the direct or indirect impact of the strategies applied over society due to the vulnerability of memory, that is an impermanent construction. Certeau affirms that memory can be modified depending on the intentions of agents, and it should be assured in materializations that act as anchors. One potent materialization of power is the modification of space; hence places are warehouses of memory.

On the other hand, Certeau opens a new front for discussion: he “celebrates” the resistance to the disciplinary regime one society might create. This French scholar asserts that the more totalitarian a power source becomes, the more prone it is to subversion. Such subversion is indeed another power in tension with the idea of control where the agent of domination is contested.⁷⁷

If it is true that the grid of “discipline” is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resist being reduced to it, what popular

⁷⁶ Such discipline helps the individual to internalize what should be considered normal (right) or deviant (wrong) behaviour.

⁷⁷ This idea of a tension amongst actors implies different forms of relationship involved in the notion of power. Well before, in 1951, that is in the early years of the Cold War, Hannah Arendt (1951) contributed to the conceptualization of power, by claiming that not only is there a relationship, but that such a relationship implies asymmetry. The relationship can be the result of the exertion of force, seduction, coercion, manipulation, legitimation, or authority. Thus the power tension may be conceived further than as an imposition, or a reaction.

procedures (also “minuscule” and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what “ways of operating” form the counterpart, on the consumer’s (or “dominee’s”?) side, of the mute process that organize the establishment of socioeconomic order. (Certeau 1984, xiv)

Despite the fact that the idea of power interpreted as control has been widely accepted, it implies the active domination of one agent “over” the passive malleability of other actors.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the conception of power as a process may be closer to other different and complementary approaches; for instance, the one drawing on the etymology of the word. “Power” comes from the Latin word *potere*, meaning, “to be able” which implies the capacity to act, to think, to do. (Dovey 2008) Conversely, both “power over” and “power to” may have a duplicitous character: oppression and emancipation – that is to say, control and freedom, but not necessarily autonomy.⁷⁹

Figure 26. UNESCO mobile public library, gaining public support through developing social programmes during the construction of the local library ©RAC

The concern about how such power is received leads us to more considerations, where I would recall Foucault's claim regarding the convenient exposition of power. (Foucault et al. 1988) In this sense, one could elaborate by saying that in a political discourse, as representation of power, there is a dual condition: one overt and visible; and another masked – or perhaps reserved to some of the actors involved. From these different constructs of power, I will focus on the masked control, in other words, the indirect control that both Foucault and Arendt have identified. Such intangible, but intentional, power can also be derived from de Certeau's construction; it seems difficult to grasp, but perhaps more related to the potential of the built environment. This more subtle manifestation of what represents power may tend to

⁷⁸ In turn, this implies a conception of power as relationship, from which I deduce a connotation of process and dynamism. The tension this power relationship generates between actors implies the interaction of different forces and manifestations. Some of them might be planned, but not necessarily all. The idea of a dynamic issue implies that involved forces or agents may create and re-create the process.

⁷⁹ Whereas “power over” has had negative connotations, “power to” has a more positive association as it opens possibilities for a more “balanced” condition of the entities involved; in other words, it does not imply superiority of one agent over the other.

normalize the asymmetrical relation, minimizing the possible dissent of different actors. It is here where the multiplicity of what is exposed, and what is silent, becomes more intriguing. Perhaps these nuances can explain the difficulty in pinning down the political discourse of Rojas, and the weight put on the transformation of the infrastructure in the country.

2.2. Soft power

In the context of the Cold War, this notion of an “invisible hand” has been inherent to power. Although referencing it before, the US intelligence expert Joseph S. Nye Jr⁸⁰ finally coined the term “soft power” in *Bound to lead* in 1990. Keohane et al. (2001) build on the idea that a balance between explicit control – mainly military and economic – and covert strategies was fundamental to the “US triumph” in the Cold War – in other words, the interplay between hard and soft power.

Nye acknowledges that diverse tactics are necessary to achieve expected results depending on the context: “All power depends on context – who relates to whom under what circumstances – but soft power depends more than hard power upon the existence of willing interpreters and receivers.” (Nye 2004) Therefore it gives a preeminent role to both the representational tactics and means, and the interpretation by the receivers of the power exerted.

Nye (2004) argues that “co-optive power – the ability to shape what others want – can rest on the attractiveness of one’s culture and values or the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices.” It should basically reinforce rather than undercut the asymmetrical relationship between different actors. In terms of international politics, however, the United States was not a pioneer in what the historian Edward Hallet Carr in 1939 referred to as “power over opinion”. (Carr 1939) Seduction of public opinion,

⁸⁰ Joseph Nye was chairman of the National Intelligence Council, Assistant Secretary of Defense in the United States, and Dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He has published about international politics since 1965.

and its subscription to ideologies, has been part of the political game, and in particular of diplomacy.

Although inherent to public diplomacy in transnational relations, this soft power also proves its effectiveness in a national context, where immediate threats may lead to a greater resistance. In this case persuasion facilitates the inducement. Manipulation of public perception had used different means throughout history in order to gain acquiescence. (Wilson III 2008) Yet, Nye warns, “soft power resources are slower, more diffuse, and more cumbersome to wield than hard power resources.”

Some of the identifiable resources of this type of public diplomacy are political values, foreign policies, and cultural expressions. The final aim is to embed these values, policies and expressions in everyday life, in a long-term relationship creating an enabling environment. To do so, soft power tactics build on three main factors: regular communication, dissemination of strategic information, and key individuals who act as multipliers.

Despite the contradictory caveat that Nye presents, “in a liberal society, government cannot and should not control culture”, cultural expressions have been widely used as political devices. I will develop the debate that derives from outcomes of such instrumentation in Chapter 7.

▪ **Psychological operations**

Political strategies of soft power are related to what in military sciences is known as psychological operations, or psychological warfare – that is PSYOP or PSYWAR. According to the manual of PSYOP of the US Department of the Army: “Psychological operations used for the purpose of creating a favourable image, gaining adherents, and undermining opponents have become a major weapon of the 20th century warfare”. (US Department of the Army 1962) After the First World War the importance of controlling flows of information to the public was identified. Since the

Second World War, it became operative,⁸¹ and part of military training not only in the USA, but amongst the Allies, and it was vastly disseminated within defence circles during the Cold War; in particular the Manual of 1979 noted: “after the Korean conflict, organizations, and techniques for tactical PSYOP improved”. (US Department of the Army. Headquarters 1979)

Figure 27. Front page: manual of psychological operations © University of Illinois

Perhaps the most complete compilation about PSYOP can be found in *War on the Mind* by Peter Watson (1978). According to the review by psychology professor Perry London (1979), most of its content was unfamiliar – and shocking – to the general public, even to psychologists, as it had remained until then “limited distribution material”. Watson’s compilation covers aspects of internal training in combat, stress, and loyalty, but it also addresses the external practice of it – in other words, the one directed towards civilians, which is the case in point.

Psychological operations, therefore, encompass political, economic, social, ideological, and also military actions. This unconventional warfare practice has been highly influential in the formulation of international and national politics. On this sort of operation, information equates to power: the ability to manipulate information, therefore, gives an advantage point in terms of control, that validates and operates: “[v]ia traditional media and non-conventional means”. (Armistead 2004)

According with the PSYOP manuals,⁸² the general objectives of operations are usually: to deter hostility, foster acceptance, build confidence, secure support, and finally to indoctrinate civilians. Such operations commonly take advantage of perceived needs, turning them in favour of the plot and presenting the idea, as stated in the

⁸¹ According to Curtis Boyd (2007), “Appreciation for the utility of PSYWAR in peace began to take shape in 1952 with the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. To improve operational effectiveness, the name PSYWAR was then changed (1962) to PSYOP to establish a term that was more inclusive of full spectrum operations—activities before, during, and after combat operations—which created greater opportunity for military non lethal foreign influence outside of combat operations.”

⁸² The current PYSOP manual of the Army in Colombia, which seems to draw from the US version.

manual, that “government programs serve the interest of the people”. (US Department of the Army. Headquarters 1979)

This sort of operation, as the politics scholar Janos Radványi (1990) pointed out, is either strategic if it is long term, or tactical, if it has a shorter span. Tasks can be inscribed in four aims: defensive, offensive, retrograde (i.e. delaying), or relief. And they depend on propagation, receptivity, and coverage. For instance, according to the US Army, “the major PSYOP effort of the United States has been by the Department of State (STATE); subsequently, the US Information Agency (USIA) which included the Voice of America (VOA)”.⁸³ (US Department of the Army. Headquarters 1979)

In the 1940s most countries had created a governmental section called the Ministry of Information and Propaganda.⁸⁴ In the case of Colombia such a role was filled by the *Dirección de Información y Propaganda del Estado* (State Directorate of Information and Propaganda – DIPE), which was created during the Rojas dictatorship. (Henderson 2001) The role of the Ministries of Information was to deal with sensitive information, propaganda by the state, surveillance of all information flows, and censorship of inconvenient data.

Governments invest considerable effort in the delivery of information suiting the interests of the state and the needs of the citizens. However, during the latent tension of the Cold War, the management of information required creative strategies of concealment: on the one hand, representing images of stability and progress; on the other, interpreting potential threats. Consequently, the DIPE played an important role in the national and international image of the Rojas regime.

Soft power and psychological operations ran parallel in order to contain the influence of socialist ideas in Latin America, as well as in other more or less developed

⁸³ USIA was created since 1953, with the aim of centralizing state information. And Voice of America was a well-known radio system for information and misinformation. An account of its evolution can be found in Nye (2004). Kenneth Osgood (2006) has recently researched the parallel case of the European system of state information, Radio Freedom Europe, which advances were presented at seminar in Crassh (2011) about Public Relations in the Cold War.

⁸⁴ In most countries this Ministry has changed its name to Ministry of Communications, or Culture, or has been divided into small and less visible units such as Departments of Information.

countries.⁸⁵ In this respect, the internal reports of the US Central Intelligence Agency that have become public – some of them through Freedom of Information Acts – about psychological operations in South America are telling. Unfortunately, the ones that have become available, so far, do not directly address Colombia during the Rojas dictatorship. They either correspond to operations in other countries at the time – i.e. PBSUCCESS in Guatemala in the early 1950s⁸⁶ – or they refer to Colombia in the context of a general survey of the region, thus being less specific. However, they do provide evidence that US psychological warfare was implemented in the region and in the country. And at the time, the increasing involvement of US entities in the region was operational to the strategy.

Cultural exchanges, the manual stresses, had the objective of creating “clear lines of responsibility for enhancing, on the one hand, foreign access to American experiences and, on the other hand, American access to foreign experiences and culture”. (US Department of the Army 1962) It emphasizes that the success of an operation relies on the creation of a “credible truth”.

• **Offensive Charm**

The charming seduction⁸⁷ of international diplomacy had involved strategies with multiple purposes, not all visible at first sight. Tactical operations to influence public opinion have included the creation of cultural institutions to promote national interests elsewhere. Such is the case of the US Committee on Public Information in 1917; the BBC in 1922; and so on.⁸⁸ The same resources and strategies will not necessarily produce similar outcomes; to our particular reference, due to the concern of German propaganda in Latin America, in 1938, the US State Department

⁸⁵ The US government undertook systematic surveys of the “influence of socialist ideas” through locating not only socialist parties and unions, but other questionable allies. Cf (CIA 1958)

⁸⁶ A detailed account of the tasks can be found in (Cullather 1994).

⁸⁷ “Charm offensive” has been used by Joshua Kurlantzick (2007) to describe the Chinese soft power strategy of the last 30 years.

⁸⁸ It can be argued that organizations such as the British Council in 1934 (formerly the British Committee for Relations with Other Countries) were created with similar purposes.

established the Division of Cultural Relations, and later the Office of Inter-American Affairs directed by Nelson Rockefeller. (Nye 2008)⁸⁹

Since the 1950s, other institutions have also played a crucial role in the dissemination of political values, under different modalities. Some of the most visible ones in Latin America are: MoMA,⁹⁰ the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Soros Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment, the Fulbright Commission, the Council of Learning Societies, and the Social Science Research Council. Additional acknowledgement should be given to US corporations and companies operating in the developing world with the convenient presentation of technical cooperation agreements.⁹¹

The involvement was not limited to the obvious aid cooperation. Arguably, US industries such as the Tropical Oil Company or the United Fruit Company were involved in these operations, as well as cultural agencies such as the MoMA, or CINTAS, which have been questioned about their deployment in US psychological operations.⁹²

George Kennan, who was a key figure in the definition of the US political strategy of containment during the Cold War, strongly favoured cultural exchanges, as “political propaganda for results that could be achieved by such means alone”. (Richmond 2004) Cultural exchanges addressed mainly elites expecting them to create a replication effect to high cultural contacts, academic, technical and scientific exchanges. Its expected outcomes were gradual and structural in the society.

During the Cold War, governments and other actors conveyed messages and images according to their particular agenda. Multilateral institutions and cooperation agreements were crucial. However, Nye notes that the definition of international

⁸⁹ This has been one of the agencies identified in Chapter 1 in the network of institutions devoted to bilateral or multilateral relations.

⁹⁰ A detailed and well documented account of this interaction of the MoMA and its political involvement in Latin America can be found in Patricio del Real (2012).

⁹¹ Further information can be found in (Cody 2003).

⁹² Originally with the exhibition ‘Britain at War’ in 1941, and later with an impressive campaign that was initially extended nationwide in the United States, and then towards Latin America, clearly played a key role as a materialization of US foreign policy. Cf (del Real 2012)

policies and tactics was controversial, mainly because what he identifies as a period of crisis in the international image of the United States:

As the Cold War developed, there was a division between those who favoured the slow media of cultural diplomacy – arts, books, exchanges – that had trickle-down effect, and those who favoured the fast information media of radio, movies, and newsreels, which promised more immediate and visible ‘bang for the buck’. (Nye 2004, 102-3)

In particular, taking into account that some of these cooperation agreements implied the assignation of resources, this may not always generate tangible and timely outcomes: “one way for a government to retain control while presenting the illusion of not doing so is by covert funding through intelligence agencies.” (Nye 2004) For instance, a recurrent reference was the case of the newly created Central Intelligence Agency covertly assigning funds to cultural organizations, and artists, until it was made public in the 1970s.

Within the political contest of the communist bloc and the western democracies, civilian co-option rather than coercion defined the ability to reduce confrontation and resistance, and to shape the preferences of countries that were consolidating their own political systems. Whilst modern development was highly persuasive in engendering cooperation from national governments and civilians, it also facilitated the containment agenda. As the Soviet politician Georgii Shakhnazarov stated in an interview in 1990, “all of us were *Double-thinkers*. We had to balance truth and propaganda.” [My emphasis] (Montgomery 2001)

Seeking for acquiescence, the combination of different strategies of power took place. The political agenda of Rojas government was greatly permeated by tactical operations. Most of these had the clear aim of assuring public support but, due to their own nature, such tactics were not entirely controllable, as Nye argued: “in the case of soft power the question is what messages are sent and received by whom under which circumstances, and how that affects our ability to obtain the outcomes we want”. (Nye 2004) This political historian mentions that a suitable simile to illustrate these elaborate tactics is the Trojan horse. In other words, not necessarily the apparent image conveys the whole. My contention is that the ambiguity and incoherence of the historical

information available about policies of the built environment is related to this soft power. Identifying what was the agenda framed by the Colombian regime, and the tactics used, provides some light on understanding infrastructural projects of this regime, and its consequences for the development of modern architecture.

2.3. Double-thinking practices

At the end of the First World War, this joint operation on the cultural manifestations of double-thinking practices took place in two instances. Historians have recently and publicly identified the participation of Cubists, such as Jacques Villon, and the Vorticists, such as Solomon J Solomon,⁹³ amongst others, in cooperating with military camouflage units. So did American designers and artists, such as George Sakier and Jackson Pollock. This was part of an open and direct participation of different disciplines in the service of concealment initiated during wartime, and sustained to protect against future attacks. Amongst them is a report to the public relations office of the British Ministry of Home Security presented by Sir Robert Vere (Robin) Darwin, Secretary of the Directorate of Camouflage, about the role of artists cooperating along with engineers, architects, scientists, and officials in creating successful camouflage operations.⁹⁴ Most of these documents show this relationship between professionals of different fields with war issues.

In the case of the built environment, perhaps the most visible cooperation was the involvement of universities and practices of architecture and engineering in incorporating their knowledge in the disguise of spaces. This was a fruitful relationship, as reportedly camouflage was incorporated as a subject of study in the 1940s primarily in the United States of America, Germany, and the United Kingdom.⁹⁵ Cooperative

⁹³ Solomon has a detailed description of strategies and methods used by Germany in order to conceal even towns at the beginning of the twentieth century.

⁹⁴ In the case of British military strategy, the research work of Henrietta Goodden (2007) traces relations on the subject with the Royal College of Arts, and recovers important archival material about the cooperation with the British forces.

⁹⁵ See Jean Louis Cohen (2011), who has a complete account on how this academic and professional connection took place in the United States.

workshops, and a published series of manuals developing best practice on camouflage were set. These camouflage manuals did not differ greatly from one another, and shared accepted practices that were disseminated in the Western Hemisphere. I will expand later on the specific content of these manuals.

Figure 28. Front page: the Art of Camouflage © BL

In 1941 *The Art of Camouflage* was published in Britain, in which Lieutenant-Colonel Clement Hope Rawdon Chesney put into words this expansion of the field into different realms: “Nature invented the art of camouflage, and man has developed it as a science of modern war.” (Chesney 1941) Drawing on from Chesney, one can conceive camouflage as art, as it is a creative process which implies a representation of some reality and allows different interpretations.

Camouflage, therefore, appears a suitable conceptual device given the available confusing information about the relationship of politics and architecture in Colombia in the 1950s, which I interpret as a materialization of the “double-truth” game. Camouflage has an extensive literature in biology, and in security sciences. However, references to it are scarce in the social sciences, and even fewer in the arts. I approach however, this concept with a certain scepticism, noting how problematic it is to enter into a scholarly trend that can be already heavily loaded.

▪ Tactics in use

Whilst the notion of camouflage is commonly understood, through unpacking the concept its intrinsic connectivity emerges. To be camouflaged is necessarily to be “in relation to”. Usually this refers to a connection between either a subject, or an object, and its surroundings. Traditionally this relationship is about those subjects or objects, disguised in their context.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Further references can be found. (Behrens 1987);(Friedland et al. 1994; Blechman et al. 2004; Leach 2006; Osgood 2006; Goodden 2007; Deer 2009)

Figure 29. Camouflage, Basic Principles: cover © NARA

Drawing on biological and military practice, it is possible to identify traditional tactics used to camouflage; most of these were initially visual, but later evolved to include other senses. Amongst camouflage tactics it is possible to find repetitions, and combinations to create disguises.⁹⁷ There is not necessarily a unique agreement about categories of different tactics, but given their dispersion, I have found it useful to simplify them into six representative groups, that will later be related to the historical material about Colombian architecture. Thus, my proposal is to group them into the following tactics: mimicry with the environment; counter-shading; disrupting and distracting; encrypting or fractioning information; masking or obstructing accessibility; and denaturing ordinary appearances. In general terms, here I will present how each of those categories works, and give basic examples to illustrate them.

- Mimicry is perhaps the most popular tactic. As it is an imitation of the environment in order to blend in, it usually takes place by colouration or shape. The salient example of this mimicry is that of the chameleon, with its ability to imitate the immediate surface on which it is placed.
- With counter-shading,⁹⁸ the purpose is to make it difficult to identify the object by blurring boundaries, or shading the object of it by the effect of highlighting the context; this relates to the effect generated, for instance, by exposure that makes a silhouette against a bright background.
- The creation of distractions that look for disruption by attracting to a decoy element, or guiding the attention away from the object, where it is even possible for the object to disappear; such is the case with smoke screens.
- Encrypting or fractioning information is one of the most recurrent practices in camouflaging communications, but is not limited to them; the aim here is to disguise the meaning by presenting the object using a system of codes, or merely fragments of information, in order to make it difficult to identify the whole.

⁹⁷ H. Blechman and A. Newman (2004) have compiled an inventory of different camouflage patterns drawing on biology and mainly military sources. It traces some influences on different cultural manifestations, highlighting what they claim is its anti-war contemporary association.

⁹⁸ This counter-shading technique was perhaps one of the first insights from art on camouflage. Abbot H. Thayer, based on animal observation, proposed a technique playing with darkness and light in order to modify the perception of a volume, in his book *Concealing colouration in the animal kingdom*, 1909. This strategy was widely used on the First World War.

- Masking is one of the most resourceful practices of camouflage, and it occurs when an element embodies a different one, something familiar, or when is possible to perceive just a fragment of an element, limiting access to the original; perhaps the simplest case would be the “wolf in sheep’s clothing”.
- And lastly, one of the most complex tactics of camouflage, a denatured object which refers to the change of external features usually making them appear as something different, but contrasting with the environment, distorting and creating confusion in its interpretation; this is the case with the use of Vorticist patterns to dazzle on camouflaged ships.⁹⁹

These relations of an individual, or object, with its environment are crucial to the discussion about camouflage: they reveal the procedures and tactics that can be adopted in order to conceal the object. Nevertheless, these tactics consider only a fraction of what is implicit. The reason or purpose of the camouflage is missing. Such classification might be a limitation. Camouflage implies an agency that is devoted to deceiving. This generates more questions than what is the nature of camouflage. In other words, more than tactics, camouflage is wilful – conscious. Therefore, these tactics are only one instrumental step in order to understand different implications involved, and the consequences of the deception, in particular the implication for the receiver of the trick. Understanding these different tactics will help to make sense of fractionate and contradictory information about the built environment produced during Rojas regime. See Chapters 4, and 6.

▪ Exteriority of the practice, the observer

Traditionally the discussion about camouflage has been focused on the relation of an object in a context, which I consider insufficient for the understanding of both the rationale and the interpretation of the double-truth strategy. However, peripheral information in the manuals of camouflage leads towards other aspects that could give a better account of what the original strategy implied. Two aspects to reflect on are relevant to point out here. The first one is the necessary differentiation between the

⁹⁹ An interesting account of the polemical participation of modern artists in the military strategies used by the British army can be found in (Deer 2009, 44-7)

subject and the object in the context. And secondly, as the purpose of camouflage is to conceal, the question is *from whom?*; this brings out the participation of what I will call here an observer, that is, the receiver. These elements will provide a better understanding of my proposal about two categories of camouflage, identified here as internal and external.

In order to develop these ideas it is necessary to recall Roger Caillois' original discussion about camouflage. (Caillois 1964; Caillois et al. 1984) Based on biological studies, Caillois considers the capacity of modification for imitation not only between the subject and the environment, but also amongst subjects – in other words, the subject as an organism that adapts through mimicry of its surroundings and of its pairs. Caillois also introduces possible reasons for such adaptation, mentioning the search of defence amongst other needs – such as a sense of belonging, attack strategy, and ageing. Hence, the focus here is the relation between the subject and its surroundings, which has been extensively discussed by Neil Leach (2006).¹⁰⁰

Extrapolating this assimilation of the subject and its surroundings, it could be seen in terms of architecture, as operating simultaneously on two different levels: on the one hand, the relation between the individual who experiments with the space, and on the other the architectural object and urban projects as artefacts in the context.¹⁰¹ Putting it differently, more than the camouflage's traditional binomials – subject-context, or object-context –; there are now three different elements in the relationship of camouflage: individual, artefact and environment. Tensions and adaptations in order to conceal between subject, object, or context will be understood as *internal* camouflage.

¹⁰⁰ Neil Leach appears to be a permanent reference when mentioning camouflage in the architectural realm. This architect claims that in the experience of the space there is a primitive instinct to blend in with the environment, arguing that such a desire is related to the sense of protection, and the need to belong, proper to psychoanalytic theory. Leach considers camouflage as multiple possible adaptations; however, I will argue that this first level of mutual transformation does not necessarily result in camouflage as has been identified, unless in these adaptations to an environment there is a specific intention to conceal from an observer. This is the rationale of the adaptation. This claim thus defines a distance from Leach's proposal.

¹⁰¹ In material culture theory, architecture as human creation is an artefact – an artistic object that is a product of the human mind, and in this sense such an object is a reflex of the human mind. Further references in: (Attfield 2000), (Rapoport 2005), (Prown 2002).

However, my proposal is to look at camouflage taking into account also a fourth element: what we would call the observer, or receiver for whom the concealment is created. This relation between subject, artefact, and context is directed at the receiver who, as an *external* reader of the connection, acquires a prominent role. Yet, so far this receiver has been overlooked when addressing studies of camouflage.

As a matter of fact, it can be assumed that this connectivity of disguise amongst an individual, artefact, context, and external observer could reach diverse levels of complexity. This brings us to the second category of camouflage I propose: the *exterior* one, based on the position of the receiver as an outsider, who may modify and particularly bring more dynamism to the relation, even providing it with temporality. The extent to which the receiver remains as external observer will be addressed in Chapter 7.

This seems to be a complex game where four elements play a specific role, but each of them is not necessarily aware of the extent of the camouflage. Traditionally this has been conceived as a unidirectional process – in other words, the process where organisms assuming the active role adjust themselves in relation to the passive environment.¹⁰² Nevertheless, I would argue that this first level of mutual transformation does not necessarily result in camouflage as has been claimed, unless in these adaptations to an environment there is a specific intention to conceal from an observer.

That fourth component, the observer, as an external agent, is essential to the definition of how the relationship between individual, artefact, and the environment takes place. The aim is to create for the observer a false interpretation of the relation between the artefact and its surroundings. It is noticeable that the external agent is the one who receives the information, which could affect perception.¹⁰³ What is relevant is that the information that appears at first glance misleads the receiver's understanding

¹⁰² Most references focus on how there is a unidirectional change of the subject, modifying its presence to suit better into a given scenario. They seldom contemplate the possibility of adaptations on the environment, as it is usually more stable. However, the dynamic of mutual transformation occurs once they enter into relation, which implies there is an intrinsic change. Such mutual change is even generated with the presence of an object in a context. The interpretation of the object changes according to its context. Similarly, the environment changes with the existence of objects in it.

¹⁰³ Camouflage studies have prioritized visibility, but camouflage practices in the animal kingdom, in the military, and particularly in the arts have evolved to cover other levels of perception as previously mentioned.

of the relation between the artefact, or the individual, and the environment. Such misleading is the goal of the camouflage.

▪ The (in) visibility game

Roger Caillois, referring to the way in which a camouflaged object can convey multiple realities – or even how it can be interpreted as the embodiment of something different, and accomplish that while it also has other connotations – coined the term “double-truth”. (Caillois et al. 1984) As mentioned above, misleading the understanding of the observer of an artefact, in a context, is the agency of camouflage.

In the psychological battlefield, this misdirection is reinforced by information presented to the observer – what I identify as an external camouflage. In the camouflaging of information there is not only the suppression and hindering of public information, but also the creation of false fronts, and glossed-over data. In terms of the proposed categories, frequent tactics in state information management included counter-shading, fractioning, and the creation of smoke-screens.(Shlaifer 2011) This obscuring of information aims to make it difficult to identify possible relations, or rationale. Most of the time, Rojas governmental decisions appear random and improvised.

These “double-truths” took different forms in media reports, propaganda, awards, and exhibitions, usually composed of photographs, photomontages, models and posters. The Western Hemisphere was very efficient at publicizing their material achievements.¹⁰⁴ So was Colombia's regime at promoting a modern image and its own accomplishments. This constitutes nowadays the bulk of the available material about the Rojas dictatorship; therefore an important part of the primary material of this research comes from material issued by DIPE.

¹⁰⁴ A detailed account of this trend in the Western Hemisphere can be found in (Kallmann 1943). According to Kallmann's compilation in different editions of *The Architectural Review*, the British government was quite prolific in this sense as he maintains “the exhibitions are never isolated: they provide the climax, or the opening bars of a campaign which is staged by radio, press, film, and posters”. Veronica Davies (2008) also traces in her paper “Steering a Progressive Course”. Kallmann also reports about different exhibitions of the British Government, see <http://www.henry-moore.org/hmi-journal/homepage/view-by-conference/sculpture-in-the-home/steering-a-progressive-course> accessed on September 13th, 2011.

Figure 30. The government showcased the achievements on infrastructure through the media, exhibitions, official reports © DIPE

As we have seen, in the Western Hemisphere, as in the Colombian case, there was a permanent presence and almost saturation of information from the state. This created an impact with the use of new technologies, but also with rapidity, providing permanent information in what I will assume was a soft power strategy to avoid any fixity in the collective memory.

This was a double game of visibility and invisibility. Drawn on Orwell idea of “double-think”, (Orwell 1954) Kim Dovey argues that in order to legitimize the ruling power one of the strategies is a self-deceit “capacity to hold contradictory beliefs, to deliberately service one agenda while justifying it with another” which usually seem to serve public interest. It ensures its relative invisibility and acceptance. (Dovey 2008) On the same line, according to Jean-Louis Cohen’s recent publication, “camouflage started at the most basic level, at the very sources of information, with the organization of ignorance. It started with pure and simple censorship of city plans and aerial photographs.” (2011, 208) To illustrate this, Cohen cites a famous case of censorship in *L’architecture d’aujourd’hui* in 1940, where two white squares appeared, instead of plans of the port of Marseilles.

Nevertheless, it is correspondingly important to mention that data was creatively used also, simulating realities. For instance, 1:1 models were created for training purposes, or even as part of the defence strategy to avoid aerial attacks on vulnerable areas, such as was the case of the fake urban sites of Paris, Moscow, Leningrad, Hamburg, Berlin, or Munich. (Cohen 2011, 190) There was a representation of a sort of reality, that requires it to be looked at again, either because it was incomprehensible, or because it seemed to be something different. In Latin America there are no precedents known about these practices of creation of aerial urban concealment within consolidated areas; one can say that the continent was under an urbanization process. However, my opinion is that they followed the same strategic principles in the definition or extension of urban areas, as we will see in Chapter 4.

Drawing on different strategies in the double-truth game, one can synthesize that information was used to accomplish different purposes: most ordinarily to endorse,

or focus particular attention on, certain facts that acted as decoys. It was also implemented to orientate a convenient interpretation of the phenomena. It mediated in conflictive or sensitive issues. And, lastly, information helped the public to catalyse social dynamics.

In sum, the manipulation of information – also that concerning the built environment, as we will see – aimed to shape processes of remembering, or forgetting. In other words, it was an instrument to mobilize public opinion, to promote, persuade, or prevent cultural possibilities. The proliferation of information, and its control, seeks to orientate, internalize, and familiarize the state image – that is, I would argue, to manipulate identity processes.

2.4. Equivocal Representation

Different Cold War strategies of manipulation of information imply compatible and complementary purposes. Alternative forms of power were necessary to assure success in a complex historical and social context as the Colombian one. The confluence of tactics of soft power, PSYOP, and camouflage allow the consideration of different relations of an object to its environment. (Barnett et al. 1988) Considering the possibility of finding elements that may be noticeable, but not explicit, what I propose, is that through the lens of camouflage, it may be possible to understand different rationales of architectural projects that act as instruments of power. By doing so, I introduce questions about the effects that multiple representations have on the capacity of the exterior observer to relate to the built environment.

It is possible to identify processes of representation by which nation-building discourses were portrayed by the state in the official media, or in state projects and policies. At the same time, it is relevant to discover how the few critical voices or silences found their way to represent dissident opinions. Both state and dissidents used different types of concealment of their message and purpose. It is open to the receiver to interpret the message on different levels, despite the bombardment of information that validated the ideal nation.

Such awareness of the role of the observer might suggest an elaborated camouflage. People were instructed not only on how to represent, but also on how to interpret, the official and the dissident voices. Camouflaging strategies in the built environment took place on different and complementary levels. One was more ideological, identifiable with PSYOPs; (Daugherty et al. 1958) the other was more physical, following patterns of what was known as industrial camouflage. Until the present this official creation has remained either unquestioned or silenced.

In order to understand what the operation in the built environment enabled, and define it as a suitable tool, I have researched the history of camouflage and a set of ideas and tactics that are associated with the practice of disguise in the post-war period. As Davide Deriu (2004) notes in his research, most of the tactics in use in camouflage were initially designed to avoid aerial visual recognition. Wittmann's manual points out:

The task of camouflage is to deceive the bombardier. Confusion, concealment, deception, and diversion are the means to fulfil this task. If complete subterfuge in evading recognition cannot be accomplished, disturbance of accuracy of observation is the next goal. (Wittmann et al. 1942)

However, the evolution of the practice after initial failures led to a more integral development; where different operations defined a complex system since the initial definition of the project, to the configuration of the space, and the experience of it.

• Camouflage and architecture

The use of camouflage in architecture is not new or unfamiliar. Indeed, it is possible to discover how, during times of war, governments promoted and issued several guides on how to disguise key spaces, military and civil, from the enemy. One such case is a study by Robert Breckenridge (1942), a member of the US Engineering

Board at Fort Belvoir.¹⁰⁵ This official illustrates how it was relevant to protect houses and industries, as the territory to be defended was vast. This protection took the form of concealing “location, strength, and purpose”, in order to disguise what was most prominent or vulnerable according to military tactics and, I would add, to political interests.

Notably, historical documents highlight the relevance of incorporating different arts and sciences in the practice of disguise. However, my interest is about different levels and tactics of concealment, particularly as architects and engineers of that time in Colombia have so far denied the possibility of such connections, without providing alternative answers. Archival material merely mentions information about contracts for parts of projects, but does not suggest a clear picture.

These creative processes and practices were regulated and standardised, producing manuals that were widely disseminated in the Western Hemisphere. Even though there is no evidence about a direct relation with my study case, they do provide elements to unravel strategies that were prevalent amongst the Allies. Therefore, based on some traces of information found in the available material, I extrapolate information of strategies in use at that time, in order to elaborate on connections that allow an understanding of the development of modern architecture during Rojas regime.

Figure 31. Front page: Camouflage manual of Pratt Institute © TATE

Also in 1942 Konrad F. Wittmann, in collaboration with the staff, prepared another manual for the Industrial Camouflage Program at Pratt Institute. This was one of a series of manuals produced during the Second World War¹⁰⁶ and took a more practical approach, illustrating case studies of civil buildings. The compilation of best practice achieved by the military camouflage units was documented and disseminated in architectural schools in the United States and Europe. Some of these schools, such

¹⁰⁵ The author compiles an account of the bases, practices and materials used by the Camouflage Section of the US Corps of Engineers. It takes some references from a previous study published in England: *The art of Camouflage* by C.H.R. Chesney (1941)

¹⁰⁶ This manual identifies Colonel Homer Saint-Gaudens as a pioneer in camouflage science.

as Pratt, in 1940, had a camouflage laboratory integrated into the art department.¹⁰⁷ One can assume that students of US universities and professionals of architecture and engineers working on state projects were well aware of them. However, there are insufficient records about the dissemination of these manuals. It is unclear if they were commercially distributed and available to the average civilian.

Figure 32. Diagram synthesizing key aspects for existing buildings and new structures: health and aesthetics along with security © Industrial Camouflage Manual

In these manuals there are specific guides on how to disguise a construction, which can be identified with the camouflage categorization mentioned above. The most common methods include: underground construction for complete concealment, – more prevalent in the European realm; reduction of visibility, known as “toning down”; decoy installations to distract or attract to a different target; disperse and “intelligent siting”; deception, such as a change of the apparent identity to make it appear “more innocent in nature”. (Breckenridge 1942, 86) The two latter are the most effective methods according to the concept of the Engineering board. “A combination of several factors (orientation, design of roofs, relief of terrain, contoural features on ground, shadow pattern of plants) may be most effective.” (Wittmann et al. 1942)

Figure 33. Architectural students were trained through camouflage design problems © Industrial Camouflage Manual

Breckenridge (1942, 40-67) also presents a detailed account of different techniques in concealment use for civilian camouflage, explained by the logic of military operations and weapons. Some of the tactics implemented were related to the change of perception of form and bulk, avoiding straight lines of extensive elements, or

¹⁰⁷ The first one is ‘Concealment of new buildings’, published by the Camouflage Committee. (UK Ministry of Home Security [1942]) And the second one was the series of publications of Industrial Camouflage Manual of Pratt Institute, particularly the one edited in 1942 by Konrad F. Wittmann. Other publications as architectural journals were also relevant the edition of special issues on Julian Trevelyan, “The Technique of Camouflage,” in *Architectural Review*, vol. 96, no. 573 (September 1944), 68–70; “Fort Belvoir: Camouflage and Headquarters” in *Architectural Forum*, vol. 77 (November 1942), 3; and perhaps the pioneer article Embury II, A. “Architects and the Camouflage Service” in *Architectural Forum* 27 (November 1917), pp. 137-138.

regular layouts. “Our watch-word must be *interconnection and standardization*”.¹⁰⁸ The recommendation in this sense was creating dispersed units and irregular borders, modifying surfaces in order to appear as smaller units.

Figure 34. Management of shadows in order to conceal existing or new buildings © Industrial Camouflage Manual

Another important element was the consideration of shadows, as they are more visible from the air than some volumes: “we may, by clever contrasts, deceive the close observer into believing he sees a relief. This illusion does not hold true for 5,000 ft., however. Real shadow is, at great distance, much more effective than any painted shadow.” (Wittmann et al. 1942)

Providing the recommendations for disguising a factory, (Wittmann et al. 1942) introduces the advantages of the subdivision on smaller buildings:

The chance of internal explosions, which could destroy the entire factory, is reduced. Explosions and damage are more localized.

Access to buildings from all sides is better. [flexible circulation]

Fire doesn't [sic] spread as quickly and is easily restricted to one unit.

Camouflage and blending with the natural pattern of the surroundings is easier.

Additions in the form of separate buildings look more natural and do not make the target bigger.

The grouping of buildings very often reveals better architectural values.

¹⁰⁸ Emphasis in original text

Figure 35. Fragmentation of the built space, different material and form to reduce visibility © Industrial Camouflage Manual

Civilian camouflage has a complete account of different techniques to disguise. Materials, texture and colour were also controlled and manipulated in order to reduce the visibility and identification of a specific installation depending on its nature and importance. However, location of the site was fundamental, taking into consideration not only terrain itself and elements of vegetation, but the relation with built surroundings.

▪ Following industrial camouflage manuals on modern development

Military units of engineers in different countries¹⁰⁹ created special units to deal with “civil camouflage”. In the case of the US Corps of Engineers, they even developed a division that dealt with civilian projects, providing wide technical assistance, and cooperation with studios for urban and architectural “key projects”.¹¹⁰ In some cases civilians were hired and enrolled in the service.¹¹¹ In other cases, they were just registered and cleared to participate in projects nationwide and abroad. I found that such is the case of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill - SOM, one of the architectural firms that held for several years “an interim security clearance” to participate in projects with the US Department of Defense classified as “secret”, either in the United States, or in foreign territories, as is ratified in a communication dated June 29th, 1955. This internal communication between the San Francisco and Chicago offices of SOM mentions the clearance issued by the Fifth Army Headquarters in Chicago and the active clearance on level “Q” by the Atomic Energy Commission to Nathaniel Owings (1903-1984) –

¹⁰⁹ In each country it adopts a different name. To illustrate this, see the following references: in the United Kingdom it was the Battalion of Royal Engineers, in the United States the Corps of Engineers, and in Colombia the *Cuerpo de Ingenieros Militares*.

¹¹⁰ They developed studios, workshops, and manuals of modelling, as it was understood that it was necessary to create a figurative scenario to test alternatives of protection, and simulate conditions.

¹¹¹ A detailed account of British artists can be found in (Goodden 2007). The focus of this book is on artists, but it also mentions architects such as Erno Goldfinger, whose office at 2/7 Bedford Street was set up as a camouflage studio. Only individual names of some artists have been related in the Americas.

who, it is worth mentioning, was the partner in charge of projects in Colombia and Venezuela. (Owings 1955)

Figure 36. "Interim Secret" clearance to SOM for projects of Defense department and the Atomic commission ©LOC

Louis Skidmore (1897-1962) confirms this involvement with US defence projects abroad, amongst other documents with a letter to George Howe, chairman of the Department of Architecture at Yale University, on February 8th, 1952, apologizing for his inability to attend a talk at the University: "I really wish I could talk with your boys, but with ninety per cent of our work defense, you will understand that I am always on call by the army on some distant job." (Skidmore 1952)

Figure 37. Letter: Skidmore's apology for absence from Princeton University meeting in 1952 for being in the South and "Ninety percent of our work now is defense work" © LOC

In fact, with the introduction of techniques such as aerial photographs – that is, information easily transferable to maps – concerns were raised about urban areas in Europe, while in the Americas such techniques made evident vast territories that then became vulnerable. Consequently, military units such as the Corp of Engineers used to incorporate "camouflage planners" who were in charge of either the creation of strategies to obscure spaces primarily from aerial views, or the design of urban areas following the same principles.

The specific term "industrial camouflage" was used in relation to civilian spaces. Apart from the direct connection with factories, plants and industrial sites, this also covered utilities, transport facilities, major civic installations, and housing. Regardless of propriety or control, it was understood that the normal operation and security of urban areas did not draw exclusively on the defence of military spaces. Thus camouflage was considered over a vast proportion of the built environment. Some of the registered planners related to the US Corps of Engineers were working as consultants in Colombia, and other Latin American countries. Such is the case of the

firm Town Planning Associates – Joseph Lluís Sert, and Paul Lester Wiener – who actively participated in planning projects for Bogotá, Medellín, Tumaco and Cali.¹¹²

Admittedly, military strategy warns about the impossibility of exposing all the possible methods and tactics in use, as different threats require a modification in the ploys implemented to protect and disguise constructions and open areas. During times of war, public awareness was advised, and public campaigns to train professionals were recommended and pursued; some strategies in use were explained to the public. Conversely, as the Cold War was a period of tension but not of open war: techniques and tactics were no longer revealed to civilians, and the public strategy changed to projecting an image of calmness.

▪ **Uncovering modernity**

I would argue that the relevance of this information was primarily because camouflage was an inherent part of the built environment practice, not only in the development of the project, but also in the early stages of its definition – from the conception of the project, its design, and even the actual process of building. Considerations regarding camouflage were present, though not necessarily explicit, as part of defence. Significantly, Breckenridge proposed – in the first manual edited at Pratt in 1942 – guidelines for military installations, which may well have influenced modern urbanization in the developing world:

In selecting the site for an industrial plan, the considerations in peacetime are generally the cost of the land, transportation and communication facilities, labour supply, and nearness to markets and source of materials. When protective concealment is a factor, the following additional factors should be kept well in mind: strategic location, dispersion, avoidance of prominent landmarks in the vicinity, type of terrain or background, layout of

¹¹² Patricia Schnitter Castellanos has finished a thesis at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya about the plans and projects of Sert and Wiener in Colombia (Schnitter Castellanos et al. 2002).

roads, and railroads in the area, and size of the area.
(Breckenridge 1942, 59)

Tracing these invisible connections is part of the necessary work to unveil different tactics of camouflage used in the built environment. The complexities of the tactics used in “peaceful” times were much more elaborate, as they needed to convey the image of anything but a military strategy. Which I argue is the case of the built environment produced during Rojas dictatorship. Therefore, in the following Chapters I will trace these relations through policies, agreements, manuals, contracts, plans and projects that define the Naval College in the frame of the National Plan of Public Works.

Figure 38. CIAM Strategic bombing © ETH Courtesy: Stephen Graham

Strategies that were ordinary in Europe and the United States were translated to the urbanization process of the developing world. Logics of camouflage coincide with similar modern postulates. In the manual Wittmann pointed out that most of the CIAM postulates could correspond with guidelines drawn on security rationale, such as:

City planners have advocated, for a long time, decentralization for the sake of safety, health, and beauty. Their aims receive unexpected support from air-protective design. Decentralization brings new problems for transportation and supply of utilities. As a whole, the factory needs more space and longer lines of communication. This brings additional building costs, but the advantages are advantages not only under aerial bombardment. Hygiene and a more pleasant architectural aspect of industrial areas are also advantageous. (Wittmann et al. 1942)

Modern development on infrastructure is appropriate to respond to political and military agenda; thus state architecture is instrumental for this purpose. Nonetheless, I should make an explicit caveat that the fact that modern architecture coincides in some of the principles of camouflage does not mean that it equates with camouflage. Similar

principles can be associated with other architecture. The case in point here is that a better understanding of the creation of an enigmatic built environment should provide clues to its interpretation. As Murray Fraser (2005) has argued, a critical architecture implies “the desire to be openly critical of the society in which it finds itself, and the need to criticize its own methods of practice and production”.

2.5. Spatial production as political strategy

Spatial production became a powerful resource. Simultaneously, the public discourse was oriented to nation-building and incorporation into the universal modern world. Silent strategies were necessary in order to assure the political agenda. The complexity implied in the notions of soft power, PSYOP, and camouflage has the goal of distorting the observer’s interpretation of the artefact, the context, or even the subject in play. Such concealment of any of the elements is the agency that allows multiple, and various, tactics to achieve its purpose.

Such warfare operations remain historically, simply by creating an effect of overlooking of particular facts. Perhaps by acknowledging that architectural experience is a dynamic process, which is constantly recreated, it is possible to assimilate camouflage to a creative operation of revealing and concealing the relation between individuals, artefacts and surroundings. The strategy is not reduced to the material application of military tactics; even if that is important as materialization of the agency, concealment manoeuvres and framing practices covered a wider spectrum.

However, it should be acknowledged that the debate about agency sometimes tends to succumb to a discussion on determinism.¹¹³ Conversely, the question of awareness about agency inverts the value to the practical autonomy of an individual in the society. Yet there is here a basic principle of dynamism and inherent duality where

¹¹³ An extended account of different positions about agency can be found in (Rubinstein 2000), (Findley 2005), (Kossak 2010)

different actors of the relationship between power and architecture can define and contest the will, or deep rules, that drive the construction of the built environment.

This obscurity of the meaning and comprehension of the artefact may influence the appropriation of it. In other words, the capacity of the space to produce social and cultural significance and value. Amidst a conflictive political period with the threat of Fascism in Europe, Caillois has pointed out that this breakage in the connection with the artefact makes it problematic to generate an identity, particularly because of the difficulty of both assimilation and distinction of what is a masquerade. "People belong to history and civilization once they give up the mask, when they reject it as a vehicle of personal or collective panic and strip it of its political function." (Caillois 1964)

Given that the dictatorship of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla played a crucial role in the dissemination of modern state architecture in Colombia, and drawing on the complexity of these relations between architecture and power, one can perhaps elaborate further questions about space as a materialization of discourses that affirm or subvert the asymmetries without reducing any of the actors involved to an absolute dominance, or docility.

This raises questions on the implication of such 'mis-representation'. A case in point is: to what extent is it possible to generate an appropriation of architectural objects that were created to be blurred? Is it possible to relate the lack of appropriation of this modern architecture in Colombia with the initial agency of these projects? Perhaps it is time to think twice about the "double-truth" that political strategies might imply. By doing so, there may be more opportunities to understand this architectural legacy that has been largely ignored, and is in increasing risk of disappearing.

Part II

3. The National Plan of Public Works

During the dictatorship of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, all the interventions and projects in terms of architecture and engineering were framed as being part of the National Plan of Public Works. The government claimed that all the projects were part of a wider strategy, and its concern was to make the projects relevant to the community. Most of the projects were necessary works of development, and they had a significant impact on the process of urbanization. The National Plan of Public Works was widely commented upon by the media and social and political circles. However, these projects were often unexpected – i.e. executed projects were either not seen as an obvious priority, or they were built in isolated areas, or suddenly – and undertaken without consulting of local built environment professionals. As the architectural historian Germán Téllez affirms:

Planning disorder was total throughout the country. Local political convenience and even personal requests from Rojas, his family and military or civil friends were fulfilled with buildings financed with state resources. (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

In contrast to Téllez, my contention is that such a National Plan of Public Works was part of a complex political strategy of the military regime, which conditioned the state architecture produced as part of it, and its reception. The Plan was public knowledge thanks to the media where it was regularly portrayed as a core policy of the government. The National Plan was a regular feature of speeches by Rojas and his ministers. The annual reports of 1953, 1954 and 1955 presented to the Colombian Congress by Rojas government were focused on this Plan. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) It was undertaken as a response to social inequality and a desire to materialize the new state. It was made widely visible, and often invoked.

Despite this visibility, the Plan was always mentioned in a deceptive manner; the government had multiple agendas at the national and international level. On the one hand, the Plan was presented as a general idea. And on the other, most projects that were supposedly part of the Plan were presented individually. There was not a unified document that clearly explained the aim, or scope, of the National Plan of Public Works. What is more interesting is that, despite the importance of this plan,

there have been no previous studies about it. It has fallen into oblivion. In this Chapter I present the historical information to support my claim.

3.1. Core policy of the regime

The National Plan of Public Works was, indeed, an ambitious programme. It is nevertheless quite difficult to pin down exactly how many projects were undertaken, and whether every project was the initiative of the Plan. For instance, in the official records of the Ministry of Public Works, 1954 is the year with the most detailed information, department by department, listing more than 1,000 state-projects – i.e. architectural and engineering – under construction, (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 5) although some of these projects began before the regime commenced and most of them were entirely functional after the dictatorship fell, as will be explained later on. Certainly, infrastructure did not begin with Rojas regime, but it was boosted.

Figure 39. Infrastructural projects equated development, international airport in Cali
© Proa

According to the government discourse, the main aim of the Plan was to provide the rural and urban areas with infrastructure. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953a, 21) It was a plan that sought to connect even the most distant rural areas with a substantial extension of the rail and road networks; this was the priority. Additionally, it included other public works in terms of engineering and architecture. The provision of sanitation, clean water, bridges, and abattoirs accompanied the construction of facilities such as educational, transportation, health, civic, social, cultural and military buildings, and housing projects. As such, its most visible trace was civil engineering works.

In reported figures, the scale of the National Plan of Public Works overall was impressive. There were hundreds of buildings planned and supposedly funded by the state in different regions of the country. As we might expect, almost all these buildings

were in the modernist style of architecture, which seems to suit the discourse of progress and development.

The importance of the built environment for the regime not only justified its recurrent presence in the political discourse, but also the considerable efforts and resources assigned to it. A sizeable portion of the national budget was assigned to the Plan, as mentioned by the Minister of Public Works, Admiral Ruben Piedrahita Arango, at the end of 1954. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) The Plan took more than 60% of the national investment budget during the first three years (1953-1955) of the government, the amount assigned for public works was 340.000.000COP (which at the time corresponded to 140.000.000USD) which represents a sharp increase in the expenditure on infrastructure.¹¹⁴ ([Colombian government] 1951-1957)

▪ **A positive image**

The National Plan of Public Works was strategically presented as a material achievement of the government. General Rojas Pinilla and his Minister of Public Works, Admiral Piedrahita Arango, were fully aware as civil engineers of the importance of the built environment. Interestingly, there is an explicit recognition in the regime's discourse of engineering and architecture as "powerful tools of progress" and social change. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 67) The provision of modern facilities helped in the construction of an important political capital, and popular support, which become essential in Rojas' legitimization in power, and in his political aspirations. (Rojas Pinilla 1964, 1971)

As stated earlier, state architecture in the country did not begin with this regime: the Ministry of Public Works had been part of the main structure of the government since 1905.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, the regime defined a change in the pattern of state architecture. In particular, it made more visible the importance of the built environment in support of the social development of the country. Up to Rojas dictatorship, there was

¹¹⁴ Which was not sustainable given the coffee crisis, amongst other factors. Further information can be found in (Palacios 2009)

¹¹⁵ The law 44, on the 29th April, 1905, created the Ministry of Public Works. As the scholar Carlos Nino mentioned, its ambit initially included "national buildings, railways, roads, bridges, and wastelands". (Niño Murcia 1991)

a trend for public works projects to be concentrated in traditional centres of social power and their surrounding areas. The poorest regions had no representation in central government. Under such conditions, it was common for the traditional centres of power to claim, and obtain, more attention and benefits from the state projects deemed necessary. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Until then, most works reported by the government as state presence were concentrated in cities, and benefited only part of the population. The complex geography of the country, and its extent, were seen as insurmountable problems. Such conditions were consolidating a deeper fragmentation between the urban areas, and the vast rural ones. The social gap was increasing. Consequently, violence and illegality predominated in extensive areas of the country. Already explained in Chapter 1.

Figure 40. Map of location of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in 1950s, growing number of urban centres in Andean and Caribbean regions © Mapsoft.net (modified)

The commission of the World Bank,¹¹⁶ and *Economie et humanisme mission*, were two different foreign missions which had begun at the end of the 1940s and early 1950s respectively and were fundamental for the definition of the regime's policies. So far, there is no clear information as to how they initially came into contact with previous Colombian governments. Yet they were reported as being close to the military government in the first years, but their final reports were not published until after the regime fell.¹¹⁷ However, highlights of their reports can be extrapolated to the discourse associated with the Plan; they were highly influential in the definition of the policy.

On the one hand, the French economist and priest Louis-Joseph Lebreton's¹¹⁸ report, *Estudio sobre las condiciones del desarrollo de Colombia. Misión economía y humanismo*, [Study about the developing conditions of Colombia, by the Economy and

¹¹⁶ Tellingly about the importance of Latin America, and Colombia in particular, according to the report published in 1961, the mission that was initiated in 1949 was the first ever mission abroad of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development – i.e. World Bank – to a developing country. The head of the mission was Lauchlin Currie, who in 1939 was the personal economic advisor of the US president Roosevelt, and had also worked closely with Truman.

¹¹⁷ There are two initial publications related to the mission (Currie 1951), and (Currie 1950)

¹¹⁸ Lebreton developed the concept of human economy as a key factor for social and economic development. As a Dominican priest he created the mission 'Economy and Humanism' and worked in several developing countries of Latin America and Africa.

humanism mission] (Misión “Economía y Humanismo” et al. 1958) argues that the social gap was the country’s most serious problem. On the other, the World Bank expert Lauchlin Currie (1961) presented the *Operación Colombia: Un programa nacional de desarrollo económico y social* report, in which he argues for the importance of creating geographical awareness, and of encouraging processes of urbanization in order to achieve greater industrialization and security.

Figure 41. Members of the Currie Mission in Colombia 1949-1953 © The Political Economy of the World Bank: The Early Years

The connectivity of the country and a fairer distribution of state resources, identified by both missions, were apparently decisive to the definition of the Plan. In one of the reports, Minister Piedrahita claimed that, even if the regional requests were extremely demanding in terms of attention and benefits from the state, resources were traditionally distributed in a different way – i.e. concentrated in the main city, Bogotá – so the regime claimed that the priority during his time in office was the national concern. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957)

The military government pretended to demonstrate, through these results nationwide, how “independently from the political tension, all our time, resources and efforts are bent on improving the living standards of Colombians, and helping them take advantage of what the country can offer”. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957)

The National Plan of Public Works constituted a core element of the regime’s desire to project an image of itself as welfare state. It addressed the vulnerable population, without interfering with the benefits of the wealthy. It was broadly presented as a government priority. The policy justified the interventions of the military government and works all around the country, minimizing possible resistance. These works were necessary in order to achieve modern development for all the population. The Plan provided modern services while claiming to help close the social gap. This clearly contributed to the popular acceptance and support the regime enjoyed even after its collapse.

3.2. How was it presented?

Warfare has demonstrated the importance of information management. Even more during the Cold War period, information was highly valuable as part of the exerted power. As mentioned in Chapter 2, DIPE administered the information of the regime and was the interlocutor with the media, filtering what the military government decided to make either internal or public. This directorate was in charge of presenting and publishing all the information made public not only by the presidency, but by all ministries and other state dependencies. DIPE produced most of the preserved information of the Rojas regime that can be found dispersed in different libraries and archives. Unfortunately there is no unified collection, of these materials, not even in the Colombian National Archives, where material of this presidency does not have the usual preservation treatments, and it is not fully catalogued, as mentioned previously.

This historical source has therefore turned out to be highly valuable. It gathers together what was presented as the National Plan of Public Works. However, one should make it clear that this is the version as portrayed by the regime. In other words, it is likely that the filter and control exerted by this dependency shaped the information found in other sources, such as the national and local media.

The presence of the regime in the newly developed media aimed to reach not only different regions, but also different social groups. The government prescribed a constant flow of information through this department, using regular public outlets, such as speeches, governmental reports, television broadcasts, and news.

▪ Speeches

As a core policy of the military government, the National Plan of Public Works was constantly alluded to as the determining factor in the transformation of the country, and as a direct expression of the people's wishes, ensuring popular support. The Plan brought together a considerable number of state activities, as it was created to catalyse the stability of the economic, social, and security sectors. The infrastructure proposed in the Plan was to be the engine for the advancement and industrialization of the country. Piedrahita was prompt to frame publicly the Regime's discourse in welfare considerations:

Even the most sceptical of Colombians would be insincere if he did not acknowledge that in 1955 the country was experiencing the most favourable signs for a long time: peace, a solid economy, business stability, incentives for new business, a considerable increase in all kinds of production, wide-ranging and favourable foreign loans and, furthermore, a definite and enduring trust in our own effort and the potential of the country. (Piedrahita 1955, 17)

The Plan was indeed a strong impulse to the development of the necessary infrastructure and, in this period, there was significant growth. The Plan was fully controlled from central government, which claimed that it was an agent of integration at the national level, and made explicit that “national needs and concerns are the priority”, thereby avoiding the claims of regional interest groups. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 279) This shows how the discourse was shaped towards constructing a modern nation.

The extension of roads, railways and airports was the most popular and recurrent item in the Plan. It covered distant areas, facilitating the mobilization of consumer products. Connectivity was essential to deal with the geographical conditions of the country. It was portrayed as the most efficient path to achieve the expected economic growth, and social inclusion. For communities, this was an identified urgency, as the dictator affirmed:

Air transport is one of the most important needs for trade and better bonding and understanding between the people of two different departments. With a vast territory and diverse topography as the Colombian, requiring huge sums of the budget for conservation, expansion and construction of terrestrial routes, the most economic and effective means to solve the transcendental problem of transport, is an ambitious plan of airports. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953c, 440-1)

Figure 42. Railways and road network map seeking connectivity across the country, but still concentrated in the Andean region © MOP

The part of the Plan that addressed the development of the built environment was less systematic and apparently lacked strategic planning and implementation. Whilst each project was portrayed as the most important at its time, all were part of the National Plan of Public Works. It is nevertheless interesting to find that very little information exists in the records of the Ministry of Public Works about the most publicized projects of the Plan.

• Reports

During the first two years of government (1953-1955), the regime was keen to inform the community about its achievements. Traditionally, at the end of the legislative year, ministers presented to the Congress a report of their activities, the fulfilment of the proposed policies, and use of the assigned budget. By doing so, their relative popularity was maintained at a fairly high level. However, these reports lost weight and credibility over the time the military government was in power. By the third year (1956), these reports were more generic, as they focused on responding to issues of repression, corruption, non-conformity, and censorship. In 1957 and 1958, the transition to the Military Board did not allow much information or reports of what was happening. The restoration of democracy was the central theme of the debates in these years.

Figure 43. Image of voluminous reports of Ministry of Public Works 1953-1958, focused on technical innovations on road and railroad networks © MOP

Nevertheless, I have used the information available from the reports of the first years of the government, as most of the projects of the National Plan of Public Works originated at that time. Fortunately, the Ministry of Public Works has preserved some of these reports. This information was supposedly presented to the Congress and Presidency; however, it has either disappeared within their archives or is inaccessible.

In the official records of the Ministry of Public Works for 1954 there is a report of 1,422 state-architecture and engineering projects under construction during that year

alone, including schools, universities, power stations, aqueducts, abattoirs, libraries, hospitals, cemeteries, parks, sports fields, social clubs, theatres, airports, markets, and state housing, amongst others. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 332) It is remarkable that almost one third of the projects were related to education. But there are other figures of interest hospitals and municipal houses are also numerous, the former in the rapidly growing regions (i.e. Cundinamarca, Antioquia) and the latter in the most violent areas (i.e. Santander, Boyacá, Tolima).

Figure 44. Table: figures by type of projects reported as inaugurated in 1954
 ©MPSB based on data MOP

Nevertheless, as Jorge Ramirez (2011) argues, “it is difficult to clarify if all these projects [reported as part of the Plan], were their initiative”, particularly at the beginning of the government, taking into account that the so-called “strike of opinion” was a smooth transition. i.e. that there was no dramatic rupture or suspension of the previous government’s activities. It is also noticeable that the core professional team of the Ministry of Public Works did not change, (Niño Murcia 1991) it is therefore possible to assume that some projects were under way already.

The regime took advantage of this. A number of projects that had been conceived before, or were even already under construction, were conveniently incorporated into the regime’s accounts. In some cases the project was built as expected, but with an expedient change of name to “June the 13th” to commemorate the beginning of the military government (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 18) – in other words, to the date of the *coup d’état*.

In general terms these projects were distributed all around the country; there is no clear information about how they were defined, commissioned or built. However, some images were included in the reports, and various lists of facilities provide data about their materialization.

There is no map of the Plan’s projects at the national level. Nevertheless, based on the reports of the Ministry of Public Works, I have prepared this map indicating the national location of projects, according to the administrative division of the territory during the dictatorship. It shows how, despite claiming a priority in a more dispersed distribution, it ends by reinforcing the concentration of projects in the traditional urban

centres in the Andean region. It does enough to ensure, however, the incorporation of distant areas and the drawing of state attention to the national borders.

Figure 45. Map of distribution of projects by department in 1954 ©MPSB based on MOP data

• **Media coverage**

The important role played by the media in modern times was clear to the Rojas Pinilla government; the dictator publicly admitted, “Newspapers and media are a source of [popular] knowledge”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953a, 171) Although some of the traditional newspapers stopped publishing before and under the military regime,¹¹⁹ this understanding may explain the constant presence of the dictatorship’s achievements and, at the same time, the dictatorship’s control of the media.

The National Plan of Public Works is referred to several times in the media during the time Rojas was in power. Even after the fall of the regime (1957), in the following years the provision of facilities all around the country was attributed to the Plan. The source of information, as already mentioned, was the Directorate of Information and State Propaganda, created by the regime. And the media received from it up-to-date access reports on the activities and the official position in debates that became increasingly relevant towards the last two years of the Rojas regime.

One can read from the media of that time how, apart from the information that came directly from the government, there were some attempts to understand more clearly what those projects implied. It was common to find a weekly section about construction in most of the daily press. *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, *El Siglo*, and *El Colombiano* were perhaps the most regular. There are various questions about the validity of some projects, the urgency of others or, more frequently, the rationale for their location.

¹¹⁹ Some of the press was suspended since the previous government, which also has records of repression and limitation of guarantees.

Figure 46. Press clippings emphasizing technical innovations in projects under construction © El Espectador

There were specific cases where the media concentrated on a particular project. At this point it is difficult to determine whether the interest in a specific topic was dictated by central government, or whether it was of genuine public concern. Such is the case with the *Centro Administrativo Oficial* – CAO [Official Administrative Centre]. The proposal to concentrate most of the governmental offices in a complex on the outskirts of the capital city incited several critics, and proved to be the most controversial project of the regime.

Figure 47. SOM's drawing and model for CAO project: these images were widely used to report the project © MOP

One of the major reasons for this controversy was that it made visible that the military government was developing different projects from those that had been expected. Years before, Bogotá had received the Pilot Plan proposal from Le Corbusier,¹²⁰ later complemented by a Master Plan by Paul Lester Wiener & Josep Lluís Sert i Lopez.¹²¹ The Pilot Plan report illustrates how the city was read at that time and, in its description of the city, it includes dynamics that are not visible in the Master Plan.¹²²

Figure 48. Sert and Wiener plan for Bogotá, 1952, concentrating the urban operation on the historic centre of the city and its immediate surroundings © LCB

¹²⁰ The project originally proposed by Le Corbusier has been the subject of study by the research group at Los Andes University. (Vargas Caicedo 1987) Recently some of the material has been recovered in an exhibition and a publication with the coordination of María Cecilia O'Byrne et al. (2010).

¹²¹ Paul Wiener and Josep Lluís Sert's projects in Colombia are part of an extensive body of research by Doris Tarchópulos Sierra et al. (2012) On regards to Sert see Schnitter Castellanos et al. (2002)

¹²² Some information about these two plans has been recently documented, however little, if existent, reference to what happened during the regime is done. Here, I am including accounts of the Ministry of Public Works regarding these plans. (O'Byrne et al. 2010)

The regime used the information that was convenient to them to support the project they were proposing, but without following the whole plan as recommended. Piedrahita argued:

In the context of South American cities, Bogotá is a disorganized, uncomfortable, and ugly city, and there is no sense in keeping it to traditional situations, that are not valid as traditions. In the city it is necessary to select, preserve and dignify whatever has a historical, sentimental, or architectonic value, in order to allow the rest of the city to be open to progress and the evolution of time. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957, 37)

Even though the government insisted on the validity of the CAO supporting the proposal on the CIAM modernist principles that were fully accepted in the architecture schools, and that were explicitly the fundamental argument of the Pilot plan, dissident voices were raised. Architects at the time rejected this and expressed anger at the “betrayal” of Le Corbusier’s proposal. An active participant in the polemic was the architect Germán Samper,¹²³ – whom I interviewed in 2011. Samper still insisted: “for the majority it was ‘inconceivable’ to dismiss Le Corbusier’s proposal”.¹²⁴ Indeed, the regime apparently ignored its content. But despite there being no direct citation of the report, some of the arguments of the military government explaining their projects followed similar concepts and modern principles.

The military government claimed that the extraordinary number of conditions, and the limited information provided, made it impossible for a reputed professional team, such as Le Corbusier’s, to create a more appropriate outcome. Such limitations were related to the resistance towards creating different solutions outside of traditional forms, and to the lack of official registers and cartography. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 44) Piedrahita stated:

¹²³ Samper had a bitter legal process associated with it, as another architect, Enrique Uribe White sued him and the SCA for slander in the course of this debate.

¹²⁴ In 2011, I had a personal interview in Bogotá with Germán Samper about his experience as an architect during the regime (Samper Gnecco 2011)

Architects of great fame, to whom I bring my tribute and admiration, came to Bogotá to propose the Pilot Plan, but they were not told about the importance of redefining vital areas, and solving urban problems. From the beginning, their possible outcomes were guided, and restricted, circumscribed to the small and congested area around the Bolívar plaza.

The CAO was presented under the logic of a city with multiple centres, identified by the MOP as: historical, religious, commercial, industrial, financial, residential, educational, administrative, and civic (the latter being a conglomeration of some of the previous ones). Nevertheless, the polemic about this administrative complex defined a breaking point with a fraction of members of the Colombian Society of Architects, and the Colombian Society of Engineers. Taking advantage of the location in the *Salitre* neighbourhood, the complex was identified in the media as 'CAOS', which in English will be translated as *chaos*. As a consequence, the official name changed to *Centro Administrativo Nacional* – CAN [National Administrative Centre].

Figure 49. Press clipping about CAOS (i.e. chaos), discussions in favour of and against the project © El Tiempo

The controversy was ferociously aired in the media. Promoters and detractors of the project sustained for several weeks an intense debate and exchanges of criticism. The regime kept a distant position:

The National Administrative Centre is not the product of a sudden desire, or an improvised decision, it is the result of wide-ranging and well thought-out studies of the needs of the capital city, now and in the future, based on estimates of the impact of this project, once it is built, on the extensive and rapid growth of the city in all its activities. (Diario Oficial de Colombia 1954)

On December 10th, 1954 Rojas signed the Decree 3.571 ordering the construction of the National Administrative Centre next to the campus of the

Universidad Nacional de Colombia. (Diario Oficial de Colombia 1954) After all, it was a dictatorship.

▪ Exhibitions

The dissemination of the information about the Plan took different forms. During the last months of 1955, the regime exhibited some of the projects that were included in the National Plan of Public Works in the *Museo Nacional* [National Museum]. This was part of the campaign to make the Plan visible, to instruct the public about the use of new facilities, and to stimulate the appreciation of the importance of “works of progress” in the community. Based on correspondence of the director of the National Museum, Teresa Cuervo Borda, it is possible to complement the information from the Ministry of Public Works. (Cuervo Borda 1955d, 1955a, 1955c, 1955b; Teresa Cuervo Borda 1956; Teresa Cuervo Borda 1956) According to records, the exhibition was Piedrahita’s initiative. The curator was the architect Luis Borrero,¹²⁵ who moved in political circles, and who had the cooperation of Alfredo Castañeda (Piedrahita’s *aide de camp*) and Diego Tovar Borda who was the director of state-buildings office in the Ministry of Public Works.

Figure 50. Ministry of Public Works staff members: notably an important number of members were military officials © MOP

Through images of the opening it is possible to identify that the exhibition brought together drawings, blueprints and, especially, models of the projects. Apparently, there was not a particular narrative, and the existence of a catalogue of the exhibition is questioned.¹²⁶ The exhibition was widely reported in the media, mentioning

¹²⁵ Not clear if it refers to Luis Borrero Mercado, a former mayor of Bogotá, or Luis Borrero Caicedo, young architect from Cali. Both prominent architects in power circles.

¹²⁶ In the archives of the National Museum there is a complete and rigorous collection of exhibition catalogues. Unfortunately there is not any visual information about this exhibition in this archive. The catalogue of this exhibition either never existed, or was excluded from the collection. I have not found any proof of its existence. However, on interviewing visitors to the exhibition, such as Germán Téllez, they had memories of such ephemera. (Téllez Castañeda 2009, 2010) Téllez remembers “a sort of folding or pliable light cardboard or very heavy paper with texts and photos of models, but no drawings or plan. It might have had six or eight pages altogether [...]. Every one of us remarked that the photo on its cover was

without giving specific data that the high attendance caused the display to be extended for a longer period than originally expected. There are three letters from the director of the Museum complaining about the extension over a holiday time. It is possible also that the controversy about some of the projects motivated the extension of the exhibition in order to influence public opinion in support of the Plan.

Figure 51. Inauguration ceremony of the National Plan of Public Works exhibition at the National Museum ©DIPE

In the media, and in the report of the Ministry of Public Works, it is mentioned that the exhibition comprised 150 images from Leo Matiz and Cano studios, a 40-minute documentary of Gran Colombia pictures, and representative models. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Pictures of the opening focus attention on the National Administrative Centre, the Bogotá international airport, and the Naval College, which was the primary image of the exhibition. The model of the Naval College was the first object a visitor would see at the entrance hall of the National Museum.

The exhibition was initially at the National Museum in Bogotá, and after, it was planned to tour to other cities for short periods, although there is not information confirmed apart from the case of Cali – the biggest city in the south west of the country – Later, there are some references in the MOP report that the exhibition travelled to a city in the Caribbean without being fully identified. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957)

3.3. How was it interpreted?

The National Plan of Public Works was a recurrent theme of government propaganda. But, how was it received in the professional realm of engineering and architecture? Whereas the information about the Plan was constant from the official

the same that had appeared in PROA magazine. That photo was taken by Paul Beer." (Téllez Castañeda 2013,)

sources, the response from the community was not so strong or regular. This can be understood in the context of a repressive government, which controlled the media. (Vasquez Botero 1956) But it can also be interpreted as support for what was happening. This ambiguous silence has continued years after the dictatorship ended. Indeed, the scarce evidence of how the Plan was received by professionals opens relevant questions about its repercussions.

▪ **Architecture and engineering realm**

Piedrahita, as the Minister of Public Works, mentions in a speech in homage to the Society of Civil Engineers, that “civil engineering will be included as an official activity”, (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 18) though there is no clarification on what implication this might have. One could assume that this acknowledges the importance of the profession for the core policy of the government. It might also be related to two important aspects: on the one hand, the relevance of the consolidation of such a professional field to the intellectual capital of the country; and on the other, an act of reconciliation by the government, after the controversy surrounding some of the Plan's projects.

There are references to how the Society of Engineers apparently took some distance from activities engaged in by the government as part of the National Plan of Public Works. According to Hernando Vargas' (2011) memories of the construction industry, a representative of the Society claimed that the exclusion of national engineers from the plan was “due to disproportionate personal ambition and local interest”. Vargas alludes to the report of the engineering journal *Anales de Ingeniería* that mentions how the road plan and railway network were developed by foreign companies with the financial support of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development;¹²⁷ these were presented as particular and experimental projects of international cooperation. This claim contradicts the argument in the public press, presumably with information provided by the government, which maintained that

¹²⁷ The World Bank initially supported activities of reconstruction in the post-war period, and expanded its activity supporting infrastructure projects in developing countries.

Colombian engineers were integrally involved in the Plan's realization without mentioning any particular involvement of foreign firms or professionals.

In the case of the Society of Architects, the situation was similar. Architects did not have such a robust instrument as the *Anales de Ingeniería*, but I found from both the journal *El Arquitecto* and some of the Society minutes that open competitions were run for particular projects. Articles also regularly complain about the direct assignment of others, without mentioning corruption but favouritism.

As we have seen, the only project to provoke significant debate, i.e. the *Centro Administrativo Oficial* –CAO (1954), ended in legal processes amongst the architects, without any effect on the government decision about the project itself. From that point on, apart from rare criticism, there is no relevant account about the reception of the Plan.

3.4. It does not exist!

Rojas and his regime continuously referenced the National Plan of Public Works as a state priority. Nevertheless, apart from recurrent references to it in official talks, records in the media, and annual reports of the Ministry of Public Works, there was never any overt explication of it. I have found no document compiling anything that might constitute an actual Plan. The closest I have come is to a document entitled a "Policy of Public Works", prepared by the minister Piedrahita (1955). Its actual contents, however, refer to a building contracts guide of the Plan. The document does not explain what the Plan consists of, or, more significantly, why exactly it became the focus of Rojas policy. What is more, there is nothing to explain why the language of Modernism was adopted for the programme. The Plan remains a shadowy and elusive subject: as we will see, the information provided by the government about architectural projects was only ever partial, with some projects being showcased, and others downplayed to the public, even though they were clearly important to the regime.

Figure 52. Rojas regime publication entitled: "Policy of Public Works", 1955 © MOP

▪ **Misleading Document**

Addressing the National Congress of Engineers, Piedrahita announced that he was going to present the National Plan of Public Works in six points. However, the document focuses on the relation of the engineering professionals to the regime, rather than on the actual Plan. (Piedrahita 1955) Here are some of the main points from the document:

- The government, he claimed, depended on the capacity of national engineers to solve national problems of public works. As proof Piedrahita mentioned that 150 Colombian engineers were participating in projects of the Ministry of Public Works for more than 25 million Colombian pesos.¹²⁸
- The government expected groups of professionals to create professionally and economically stable companies to receive contracts from the State. Some of them would link with financial institutions to allow strategies of funding, such as concessions of works, to reach funds not included in the national budget.
- As the National Plan of Public Works had exceeded the assigned budget, there was to be a system of tolls and charges to support the maintenance and development of new projects.
- It also announced the creation of betterment taxes on rural properties to allow for the construction of connecting roads in remote areas.
- It stipulated that all the contracts for public works will be issued under a system of Unitary Costs of Construction.
- It gave information about the disposition of the Ministry of Public Works to provide building machinery in order to accelerate construction and reduce costs.

This is a clear example of how the government's information was misleading. The document does actually refer to the Plan, but does not explain what the Plan consists of. The document delineates the generalities of the policy, but the agency,

¹²⁸ Equivalent to 10.373,000 US dollars at the time.

scope, schedule, funds, and guidelines of the core plan of the government were never made explicit.

▪ **Fragmentation of information**

Another strategy of the dictatorship was to present information about the National Plan of Public Works as individual projects with reference to the general Plan. In other words, most projects were explicitly related to the Plan, but rarely connected to similar projects.

In the annual reports of the Ministry of Public Works, only roads and railways were presented on a national scale. There was an important investment in the opening of new routes, and the maintenance of existing ones. There was an appeal to increase accessibility to the most distant areas, related to the possibility of development for those areas. Yet geographical and environmental conditions were constantly introduced to explain delays in the execution of these projects. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957))

Figure 53. Extensive construction of railroads or roads in order to connect different regions © Colombia en Marcha

In the case of architectural projects, the regime only showcased a small number of the projects to the public. In the budget and financial records of the Ministry of Public Works, other projects are included, which indeed received important sums and priority in execution. Such is the case with the military installations. They were never mentioned in the annual reports, nor in the press releases of the Directorate of Information and State Propaganda.

Each individual building played a key role in the local realm, but was portrayed as independent of any similar building. It was a state building, but was not part of a national or regional system. Rojas was assured of having the “inauguration” of projects all around the country for the first anniversary of the government. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a,) In almost every town of the country there was an opening or a “foundation stone” of a public work. It included a wide variety of projects: schools, universities, libraries, hospitals, telephone exchanges, civic centres, hospices,

nursing homes, stadiums, gyms, abattoirs, markets, warehouses, churches, jails, cemeteries, squares and monuments. The regime's figures emphasize the allocation of state projects for each town. They do not mention a systematic approach to the provision of welfare services. It is difficult to trace them as a group where they might support each other to satisfy national needs.

Figure 54. People attended exhibition of National Plan of Public Works: didactic explanation through models and perspectives ©DIPE

3.5. Making of the National Plan of Public Works

The established literature has criticized the rapid development of the time as an entirely improvised and reactive process. Given the figures, and cultural practices of the country, this claim has long been accepted. However, after identifying the absence of concrete information about the National Plan of Public Works of the dictatorship, the scholar Julio Dávila contests this interpretation, arguing that in order to assign resources, from both the national budget and the cooperating agencies, it was necessary to have an actual plan.¹²⁹ Considering that it was a dictatorship it may well be the case that national institutions just followed the order given, but the question about the international agencies still persists.

Even if there is not a single document of the so-called National Plan of Public Works, this does not mean that the regime did not have an agenda in terms of the built environment, which clearly occupied a pre-eminent role in the urban emergence of the country. Therefore, I explore in the first instance the most visible sources of this agenda: Rojas himself, the personnel directly involved, and the discourse associated with it.

¹²⁹ The urban historian Juan Carlos del Castillo mentions the existence of previous plans of public works, as a network of roads, railroads, and harbours. (del Castillo Daza 2002)

▪ **Rojas as engineer**

Gustavo Rojas Pinilla proudly mentioned on a couple of occasions how he had “earned the necessary money to finish his studies as a Civil Engineer in the United States, working as a labourer, like any other worker, at the Ford factory”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953a, 43) As his graduation project in 1927 at Tri-state College in Angola, Indiana,¹³⁰ Rojas proposed a new airport for Bogotá, one he managed to build during his regime.

Figure 55. “Rojas designed the international airport” press clipping, 1953 © El Tiempo

Addressing unionists, the dictator claimed: “my will is constantly to calm the anguish of the labourer, and the farmworker, and respond with works to the desires for peace, effective protection and social justice”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 403)

Rojas presented himself as middle working class. His biographers have conceded this, as he was a member of a non-prominent family, from a minor provincial capital: Tunja, in Boyacá. Few of them have mentioned how his first education at university was in pedagogy, which provided the foundations for a later career that fluctuated between engineering and the military. Rojas began his engineering studies in Bogotá in 1918, but after the death of his father, he embarked on a military career. After renouncing the military to continue his studies in the United States, he returned to Colombia as a practitioner on “roads, airports, and other ‘civilizing’ projects” which provided him with contact with further regions. Due to the border war with Peru in 1933, president Enrique Olaya Herrera called reserves to duty, which not only meant Rojas’ return to the military, but a boost to his visibility within the army, and a better appreciation of the conditions of the national borders.¹³¹ Later, Rojas was sent on strategic missions that allowed him to interact with high-ranking officials in Germany in 1936, and the United States in 1944 and 1949. In 1940, Rojas undertook a “High Rank” course. He occupied the head of the Civil Aviation Department in 1945, and in 1949

¹³⁰ The institution was renamed in 2008 as Trine University.

¹³¹ For further information about his biography see (Rojas de Moreno 2000) (Lasso Vega 2005)

was designated Minister of Post and Telegraphs – i.e. Communications. Between 1950 and 1953 Rojas occupied the highest posts in the Army, and the Inter-American board, including being commissioned to the battalion participating in the Korean War.¹³²

Figure 56. Rojas Pinilla in a speech with prominent social and political figures of the country, 1953 © Discursos del General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla 1953

Considering the minimal social mobility Colombia has historically had, and the level Rojas reached, it is understandable that he is still a byword amongst army officials for being a brilliant strategist. Conversely, as noted by Téllez, within higher social and economic classes Rojas and his followers were regarded as “parvenus and upstarts, without any importance for history”. (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

▪ Other members of the government

Strategically, there was a remarkable continuity of personnel in individual departments despite the changes in the government. When he took power, Rojas tried to facilitate a transition from the previous government; the incorporation of new members of the government was therefore gradual. In addition, after the dictatorship fell, high-ranking officials who had been part of the regime formed the military board that replaced it.¹³³ In the Ministry of Public Works, the minister in office changed twice: the architect Santiago Trujillo Gomez,¹³⁴ the former Minister, remained in office more than one year. After him, the most visible Minister of the regime, the admiral and engineer Ruben Piedrahita Arango, moved to the post from the *Instituto de Crédito*

¹³² After his time in power, Rojas was initially in exile, and only returned for a trial in the Congress, as discussed in Chapter 1.

¹³³ Most of the stable names in the ministries were: Government, Lucio Pabón Núñez. Foreign Relations, Evaristo Sourdis. Justice, General Gabriel París Gordillo. War, General Gustavo Berrio M. Economy, Carlos Villaveces. Agriculture, General Arturo Chary. Health, Bernardo Henao Mejía. Mines and Petroleum, Pedro Nel Rueda Uribe. Education, Daniel Henao Henao. Communications, Coronel Manuel Agudelo. Foment [commerce], Alfredo Rivera Valderrama. Work, Aurelio Caicedo Ayerbe. Public Works Admiral, Ruben Piedrahita Arango. cf Andres González Díaz, compiled a complete list of ‘Ministros Del Siglo XX’. The military board was a provisional government to call for democratic elections within the bipartisan agreement. Its members were officials that in the Rojas regime acted as: the Police director, General Deogracias Fonseca Espinosa. Army Commander, General Rafael Navas Pardo, and the former director of the Colombian Intelligence Service, General Luis Ernesto Ordóñez Castillo, who were joined by Admiral Rubén Piedrahita Arango and General Gabriel París Gordillo.

¹³⁴ Assigned on June 13, 1953 by decree 1469

Territorial – i.e. the national dependency supporting housing developments.¹³⁵ Later, Tulio Ospina Perez was assigned to the role shortly before the regime ended, and continued under the military board.

Carlos Niño Murcia (1991) reports that the staff of the Ministry of Public Works remained similar throughout the period. Diego Tovar Borda was the director of National Buildings for 12 years (1950-1962). Other architects of the Ministry – about whose specific role there is no clear information – were: Antonio M. Alba, Guillermo Castro, and Leopoldo Rother, who had previously been external advisors or hired architects; and Jaime Bayona who had begun as a draughtsman and continued after the military board. (Niño Murcia 1991) In the compilation of projects, however, new names begin to appear.

In a sense, these permanencies in personnel crafted the continuity at the interior of the Ministry of Public Works, and made difficult to assign the credit for them to one or other government as mentioned earlier.

Figure 57. Projects in different regions were under construction for extended periods: Universidad Tecnológica Pereira © Carlos Drews

In the interview I had with Carlos Niño Murcia (2011), he critically reports a relevant change: the Ministry of Public Works had traditionally controlled all state projects, while during the dictatorship some projects were decentralized to other ministries, that ended up also developing constructions – for instance, the Health Ministry was in charge of constructions for hospitals and sanitary locations. Maybe this allowed for more efficient delivery on multiple operational fronts. Feasibly this can explain the difficulty in consulting the remaining data of the regime. Or possibly it contributed to the mismanagement and corruption for which the regime was criticized. But, wondering about the rationale of the Plan, it is also conceivable that the multiplicity and simultaneity were related to the intention of making projects respond to diverse agendas.

¹³⁵ Assigned on August 7th, 1954 by decree 2392

Considering the stability of the conditions of the Ministry of Public Works in terms of advisors, staff, and resources, questions arise about the sharp increase in the activity of the state architecture and engineering. For instance, how was it possible to fund and manage such a significant number of simultaneous projects in different regions? What was the difference with previous and subsequent governments, and plans? With each piece of information found there are more questions to address.

3.6. Unveiling the Plan

The importance of the National Plan of Public Works is that for the government of Rojas Pinilla it constituted the core policy. Most of the political, social and economic decisions were related to the so-called Plan. Of the few documents available in the Colombian national archives, it is clear that the Plan was portrayed as necessary and beneficial for national unity. At a critical time for the regime, Rojas argued:

I had to think of peace, [that is] national unity, this national unity that all the countries of the world look for, because the security of sovereignty and the freedom of the people lay on it. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1956, 346)

In a traditionally democratic country such as Colombia, Rojas made strenuous efforts to present his government as transitional and legitimate. Acknowledging the history of social fragmentation and inequality, Rojas claimed his transitional government was the beginning of a “new state” (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 213) – one that aimed to be more inclusive, egalitarian and safe. Initially, the government was widely supported by the public, institutions, and even foreign governments. Indeed, Rojas’ *coup d’état* has been described in most historiographies as a “coup of opinion”.¹³⁶ An indicative fact of the populist orientation of this regime was its motto “Peace, justice and freedom”. However, the excesses and

¹³⁶ Although different references of Dario Echandía or Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza, as the one who coined this label to describe the military seizure of power, the term is generally accepted and registered in historiographies. Cf (Safford et al. 2002b; Palacios 2006)

repression of the regime stand in contradiction to that motto. The nationalist discourse that this military government adopted was not related to a recent independence, but to the idea of progress and modernization. Rojas constantly insisted in his speeches that the aim was to create “progress for all” and thereby close the existing social gap. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 1954a, 1953a, 1953b, 1954b, 1953c, 1954c)

The dictator promulgated a “political binomial: military forces and people” as the motor to enter the modern world. The regime adopted a protectionist state image providing necessary services through “an ambitious project of works for progress”. (“Llamamiento a la nación del Presidente Rojas Pinilla” 1954, 4) Such works constituted the National Plan of Public Works. These projects were crucial to maintaining the façade of a welfare state. Yet we have seen that they are not unambiguous.

4. A national project

It was convenient for the National Plan of Public Works to be portrayed as the core element of the modernization of the country. As an underdeveloped and fragmented country undergoing a profound social and political crisis, Colombia was a fertile terrain to recreate the trends of the post-war years.

Latin America was not destroyed or directly affected by the Second World War, but I will contend that, as its references – namely Europe and the United States – were in crisis after the wars, countries of the American continent joined in the impulse to recreate themselves. Colombia's social and political situation represented a historic opportunity that was seized by Rojas regime. After the war, a nationalist discourse was essential both in the international realm and internally in each country. As the geographer Sara A. Radcliffe has observed: "the nation-state in the region has often been understood as the agent and symbol of modernity". (Radcliffe et al. 1996)

Similarly to Radcliffe, other Latin Americanists have followed Benedict Anderson's¹³⁷ argument about the substantial difference between the Latin American and European notions of nationalism. Anderson conceived it as a dynamic social and political construction that emerges from within the community. This approach can be criticized as simplistic and commonplace, but it corresponds with the standardizing and unifying rationale of Rojas' attempt to create a new state: the General imagined a nation, and set the conditions to shape it, as he declared on the first anniversary of his regime.

The new state, *the state we want to construct*, is one of happiness, strength, work, and security for Colombians; a state without family or class differences, but with firm support to

¹³⁷ More than an ethnic interest as elsewhere, Anderson (2004) points out that alternative forms of cohesion took place in peripheral regions such as Latin America in order to define its nationalisms. Also argued by (Guibernau 2006).

those of reduced means. The new Colombian state will be nationalist, free, fair, and positive. God's will is a Colombia as nation of workers and an emporium of historic projections. [My emphasis] (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 237)

It is worth to make at this point a note about the interchangeable use on the Rojas' discourse of "nation" and "fatherland". Following the remaining documents from the presidency archive of this period, there seems to be a preference for the idea of the nation, as a renovated image – that is, the modern image – over the direct relationship of the fatherland with tradition and the inherited past. The military government was proposing to recreate cohesion according to modernist principles that opposed the colonial social legacy.

Rojas embarked on a colossal enterprise. With continuous references to contemporary leaders, he assumed the posture as the personal promoter of egalitarian modernity. The modernization of the country however, was not his own initiative as former governors and intellectuals had begun the process in the 1930s. (Romero Isaza 1994) Maybe the most visible difference relates to the explicit allusion to the creation of a new state. The projected nationhood was directly interconnected to nation-building and social inclusion.

Contextualizing the privilege of access to knowledge in the midst of an illiterate majority, the scholar Nicola Miller (1999) identifies how intellectuals have contributed to Latin America's modernization process – either in direct political positions, or acting in the manner of custodians of "the national consciousness" or, finally, as mediators between the masses and the state. Nevertheless, the role of intellectuals has been paradoxical in any of the debates around the subject of nation-building. On the one hand, they claimed to embody the popular will, assuming responsibility as public figures, but, on the other, their practical agency was limited, downplayed and conditioned by the leaders of the state.

The utopian nation sought by the military government addressed the social base. Material wellbeing and physical progress were necessary to tackle the popular concerns of an egalitarian community. The regime embraced its own idea of the new

state. The National Plan of Public Works was an instrument to call for the unity of the country around the concept of an ideal nation.

4.1. State unity

While the country was still unstable, the Rojas government uttered calls for national unity – both in order to preserve the integrity of the territory and to attain peace as a nation. The official discourse maintained that development and inclusion in the modern world were appropriate ways of reducing the social gap. The territory reinforced social fragmentation. Thus, the National Plan of Public Works claimed to address the deepest needs of the most deprived communities, located in the hinterlands. The Plan also assured a state presence along the borders, and other distant regions where the communist influence was gaining terrain.

Historically, for diverse reasons Colombia has repeatedly “lost territory”.¹³⁸ The territory of the country has been dispersed and diverse. Whilst state resources were concentrated in the urban centres, the central government had little control over the vast territory, where there were upsurges of violence as well as raw materials to be exploited.

Throughout these rural areas the population was more exposed to the threat of communism. Nicola Miller (1989) has pointed out how the Soviet Bloc addressed two main actors: intellectuals and peasants. Rojas in a popular manifestation in Cartagena, also acknowledged the inequalities between rural and urban areas, claiming that:

From the strengthening of a social policy that improves the living conditions of our urban and rural workers, and avoids the danger of the class struggle, to the multiplication of housing as an effective formula of strengthening the family, giving the most

¹³⁸ As commented in the first Part of the thesis, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Latin American countries adjusted their territories. Since the 1930s Colombia has not been disposed to cede any more, which has been the historical rationale of the war with Peru (1933-1934), and a more recent tension with Nicaragua, regarding the archipelago formed by San Andres, Catalina, and Providencia in the Caribbean sea. Thanks to Juan Carlos Rojas for calling my attention to this fact, acting as respondent to my paper in a seminar of Architecture & Anthropology at UCL, 2010.

disadvantaged groups a clear sense of the dignity of men and citizens; From the adoption of rational plans in public works, to the defense of our agricultural products, without forgetting fundamental reforms that refine the justice, combat impunity and ensure the scrupulous management of funds of the State. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 531)

By doing so, the government acknowledged that the rural violence had its origins in the non-conformity of the population, and took this issue of social inequality as an opportunity to build on it. Integrating the hinterlands would provide a desired equality. Through the Plan the government acknowledged communities and places which had traditionally been relegated. This implies an innovation noted by Radcliffe in the parallel case of Ecuador:

Geographers have considered the power relation of the modern nation-state as fundamental to the nature of modernity's projects. [...] As the locus of power in modernity, the nation-state has played a central role in the disposition of subjects, landscapes, and resources in a "rational" self-evident topography. (Miller et al. 2007, 26)

In the political discourse of the Regime, state projects, providing modern services for needed communities were associated with a sort of 'transitional' landscape – that is to say, dispersed locations in the country and in the outskirts of urban areas. The specific aspects of the location, and its rationale, will be explained later on.

Figure 58. Political capital built by Rojas, 1953 © El Tiempo

The state's presence was necessary to ensure the idea of a nation and the control of its territory. But at a time of internal tension, and in the difficult conditions of civil society, the presentation of the National Plan of Public Works as the provider of modern services to the most deprived and vulnerable groups facilitated the definition of projects and normalizing practices, minimizing possible resistance to them.

Nicola Miller (1989) has further pointed out that, in South America, modern development was an integral part of the political discourses of both democratic and

totalitarian regimes. Nevertheless, it was not a unified process in the region or in any particular country. There were a number of simultaneous modernities. State-led nation-building was indeed one of the modern ideals in the region.¹³⁹

Notably, Rojas addressed this importance of the materialization of the imagined community as he reported on achievements during his second year in power:

The Nation is not only a fragment of land within borders defined through centuries, but is essentially the human collective, connected by the invisible ties of beliefs, idiosyncrasies, traditions, and creations; this is exteriorized in its ornamental and architectural works, where its emotions and trends are portrayed. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 115)

▪ **Ambition of progress**

The discourse imposed about modern development was, as I have mentioned, neither an innovation nor exclusive to the regime, but Rojas embraced it and made it core to the military government. Modernity suited not only the internal social difficulties, but also the international discussion.

Scholarly production from different disciplines¹⁴⁰ identifies the modern movement as aimed at securing universal access to hygiene, education, communication and social integration, by means of an efficient use of resources, the incorporation of new technologies and of course, even if it was not mentioned very regularly, security. The National Plan of Public Works addressed in principle these aspects.

Contributing to the history of engineering in Colombia, Vargas Caicedo (2011), asserts that the mid-twentieth century encompassed a transformation of the mentality and means of urban centres in Colombia; thus, according with him, urban history

¹³⁹ Cf (Bethell 2010; Miller 1999; Miller et al. 2007; Miller 1989)

¹⁴⁰ See (Miller 2008)

provides “a bigger picture about the modernization of the nation based on the infrastructure as indicator of organization, and collective results”.

In the interview I had with Dora Clement de Piedrahita (2011) the widow of the Minister of Public Works, Ruben Piedrahita Arango, there is a certain defensiveness, but at the same time a clear pride in the relevant projects developed during the Admiral's time in the Ministry. Along with family memories, Clement makes random references to some of these projects. What seems most vivid in her memories is the controversy about the projects, and the need to establish that they were driven by a concern for the development of the country.

Clement ratifies what was reiterated in Piedrahita's discourse: “With all the strength of our heart, we appreciate and respect the past, but we cannot live as in the past.” (Piedrahita 1955, 37) The ambition of transferring the advances of the modern world to Colombia played a crucial part in the definition of priorities in the National Plan of Public Works.

To be modern was interpreted as being different from the past, and thus associated with a new order and with progress. The New State was associated with a more globally aware, healthier, and better educated society. The Plan sought to improve living standards by the introduction of modern facilities. These facilities comprised three general categories: sanitation (water provision, sewage disposal, hospitals, abattoirs); communication (roads, railways, airports, harbours, private and rural telephones, media); and education (civic centres, university campuses, schools, museums).

The urge for progress and development to improve the living conditions of the population all around the country may have created some optimism within the population. Indeed, the Plan providing for diverse modern facilities followed a consistent logic. However, the reality was less utopian. The internal situation of the country meant that insufficient measures were taken to ensure such modern standards, and progress was lethargic. The discrepancy between discourse and practice is noticeable as uninstructed users could not understand some of these modern facilities imposed on them, as we will see.

▪ Implications of the new developments

The modernization of the country through the National Plan of Public Works had political, social and economic implications. The provision of engineering and architectural infrastructure was by no means improvised.

The State presence in distant regions and in the hinterlands made it possible to rationalize the territory in diverse ways – namely, mapping, making inventories, characterizing territories, creating homogeneities, integrating regions, and ratifying boundaries. Common to these activities, and of particular relevance for Latin America's modernity, is the double sense of "place" as both location and social rank. There is then, a correlation in the construction of spaces and of communities.

Figure 59. Featuring and expansion of the construction industry: inauguration exhibitions centre in Bogotá, Corferias. © BLAA

Noticeably, the Plan also gave in different regions a massive impulse to the construction industry, and to urbanization, which was a key factor in consolidating modernism in Colombia. It required accelerated and practical use of available resources.

Connectivity played a part in the acceleration of industrialization. Networks of roads, railroads, airports, and harbours facilitated and in some cases made possible the exploitation of resources from the hinterlands. The Minister reported that the creation of a road network in what were still rural areas reduced both costs and time of operation. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) International investment was attracted and contributed to an incipient industry. Even if the silent role of this infrastructure has not been acknowledged in historiography, it coincided in terms of time and space in serving the development of industries in the 1950s, as noted by Sáenz Rovner (2002).

A renewed cohesion of civil society, that felt included through both these facilities and new social practices, boosted political capital with the masses. Despite the constant allusion to the "government of the military forces", it was Rojas himself who personally capitalized on this political capital, and as materialization it in turn reinforced the US fear about the communist tendency of the regime.

▪ **Support for the Plan**

How was it possible to carry out such an ambitious number of projects? As mentioned in the historical context, in the post-war period Colombia still had financial resources from the coffee bonanza, as well as from Panamá's compensation. It has also been claimed that the raw materials in high demand in the post-war period created a new affluence in the country. It should also be acknowledged that the National Plan of Public Works received important support in terms of international co-operation. The historical information about this is vague and disconnected, but I am tracing relations from the available sources of evidence.

Though the internal situation of Colombia was complex, as we saw in Chapter 1, it was not isolated as a country. Both the richness of its natural and mineral resources were greatly in demand during the post-war years but, more importantly, it had a strategic location in the north-western corner of South America just at the Caribbean – in other words the US Achilles' heel – brought a particular international attention.

Foreign policies were relevant to developments in architecture during the early stages of the Cold War. The international diplomacy not only ensured the technical cooperation but the mutual security. Acknowledging the influence of the Soviet Union in the US "backyard", (Berle Jr 1961) Latin America proved greater importance under the revived label of "Pan-Americanism". One of the most prominent policies in this sense – and most relevant to this history – was the "Point Four Program" of US President Harry Truman (1949), under which most of the technical cooperation in Colombia was provided.

Despite its assessment of the risk of "impiety and international communism" in Latin America, (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954b, 228) Rojas' speech, to the accredited diplomatic corps, is apparently the only public one which, calling for solidarity against communism, contains an explicit reference to the Cold

War.¹⁴¹ From the minutes of government meetings it is clear that the subject was discussed, but never aired in the media directly. The US cooperation agreements¹⁴² detail how technical and financial support was provided in priority areas of infrastructure. In compensation for the technical cooperation, the most strategic natural and mineral resources were committed not only at that moment, but also in the future. (US Mutual Security Program 1951)

However relevant this international cooperation, such an ambitious Plan also made use of, and sought, other available funds. Based on the dynamics of the international market, Colombia speculated on the continuity of coffee value, and other exports, creating estimations of “future budgets” but also having the first international mission of the IBRD (i.e. the World Bank), certainly facilitated the acquisition of international loans. During the 1950s the national debt of Colombia reached one of the highest levels in the continent. (Sáenz Rovner 2002)

At the same time, the local financial system also modified its target clients, integrating the State. (Bateman 1969) Ruben Piedrahita addressing a meeting of the Society of Civil Engineers claims that the *Instituto de Crédito Territorial* [Housing State Fund] had been focused on housing: more specifically, social housing, built with credits with the lowest interest rate possible for local banks. Piedrahita declared it to be state policy that “the financial system and public funds should provide [also] communal facilities”.¹⁴³ (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1955, 15)

However, as there was much ambition about the scope and number of projects of the National Plan of Public Works, funds were insufficient to cover all the associated demands. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Therefore, some projects of the Plan suffered delays, postponements, and cancellations.

¹⁴¹ The scholar Dr Tanya Harmer, a specialist on the Cold War in Latin America, mentioned that in her years of research on the subject in the region this was the first discourse openly addressing the Cold War.

¹⁴² The US government has a complete record of the agreements by country. Some of them are reported in (Hardoy 1982).

¹⁴³ Piedrahita was honoured at the end of 1954 in Tequendama hotel as one of the first signs of reconciliation with the Society of Civil Engineers p. 16

▪ Location of works

Due to the violence in the hinterlands, and incipient industrialization, there was a significant rise in the figures of rural migration to cities creating an urban escalation. At the interior of the cities an initial process of densification of consolidated urban areas took place, but then informal settlements on the outskirts rapidly became shanty-towns, replicating the risks of rural areas in proximity to the centres of power. The incipient town planning undertaken by local governments was insufficient, as the growing figures surpassed all the forecasts.¹⁴⁴

In consequence, the government responded in two ways: providing a state presence through services in middle-sized cities, and strategic towns, in order to diversify the migratory phenomena; and tackling the expansion of the urban areas of the main cities. In other words, the confluence of the political interest, and the capacity of the territory, defined the location of the facilities. This phenomenon responds to what Radcliffe remarks as a spatial disposition of Modernity's landscape of power: "[it is] a story about the location of objects, boundaries, and subjects and their interrelationships across the space". (Miller et al. 2007)

One of the most striking elements was the location of the Plan's projects not only at the national level, but also within the existent urban areas.

With the exception of the capital city, Bogotá, the regime claimed the Plan was responding to a state void, i.e. the lack of a visible state presence. Thus, architectural and engineering projects might be explained simply as the provision of modern services to a vulnerable population. Yet the rationale to locate facilities, such as water treatment plants, sanitation systems, hospitals and schools, in major towns and middle-sized cities might not be sufficient in all cases – for instance, when to a minor town is assigned a school with similar characteristics to one for an middle-size city. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Moreover, different questions emerge when other infrastructure projects are assigned to urban centres, such as university campuses, airports, military installations, harbours and warehouses, amongst others.

¹⁴⁴ Corbusier's plan foresee a population of 1.653.242 in an area (central area) of 6577 hectares for the next 50 years, that figure was reached in 1964, that is 17 years. (Saldarriaga Roa 2010);(Vargas Caicedo 2010)

The deceptively arbitrary distribution of projects conveniently facilitated territorial control, whilst providing modern services to reduce social inequality. Rojas claimed: “The government aims an ambitious work of progress [...] filling every empty space”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 57)

In order to illustrate this point, I have located infrastructural projects reported in the annual report of 1954. The distribution in different regions confirms in this case what was openly claimed by the regime. At first sight, apart from departments where the main cities are located, others such as Boyacá – Rojas’ birthplace – gained state attention. Given the number of projects, the regional social and economic effect of these projects could be a subject for further studies.

Figure 60. Regional location of facilities in Boyacá, 1954: ensured state presence in most of the area © Ochoa Planning Map (modified)

And then, once the allocation of these projects in specific cities is accepted, the next question is where to locate them in the urban pattern? In addition to the social aspects already mentioned, there are physical and economic considerations I will propose.

Most urban centres, even if they began during the post-colonial period, were consolidated colonial patterns – dense reticules formed by low-rise and continuous buildings around a central plaza. Traditional construction systems in *tapia pisada*, i.e., a Spanish legacy of rammed earth walls,¹⁴⁵ adobe and masonry did not permit the elevation of high-rise buildings. Therefore the rapidly growing population arrived to the outskirts areas of cities, carrying along its rural difficulties, and breeding problems in the provision of suitable modern infrastructure; thus shanty-towns became an emergent hazard.

Interestingly, the regime adopted a position that at the time diverged from the prevalent ideas of architects and urban planners. The regime adopted the preservation of these consolidated areas as representative of the fatherland’s legacy. Rojas

¹⁴⁵ The traditional construction technique of thick walls made of encased mud. *Tapia pisada* consists in compacting moistened earth and some stabilizer, between formwork panels that are removed once the wall has dried. The wall is also called *tapia pisada*.

remarked on an interpretation of the value of the pre-existent that might explain his interest in preserving it.

From prehistoric relics until current times, Colombia presents to informed eyes a rich variety of features of all kinds that successive generations have left as a legacy of their existence, and as a prolongation of their beliefs, lives, and human concerns. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 115)

Economic reasons can also be adduced, as demolition and construction in areas already occupied would have required greater resources, as well as more displacement and, consequently, time. Therefore, it appears to have been more convenient in terms of efficiency to expand into new areas that, if left as shanty-towns, had the potential to become problematic; this in turn matches the modern ideal of the clear space.

• **The process of urbanization**

This phenomenon of intervention in the outskirts not only solved problems; it also created an opportunity to define urban patterns of growth that shaped the current urban form in most cities.

As Piedrahita explained, the proposal of state buildings on the outskirts defines the tendencies of city development that attempts to solve inadequacies of spontaneous development. Such is the case with the axis generated in Bogotá to connect the new international airport, and the National Administrative Centre, with the Tequendama hotel, i.e. defined by then as the first international business centre, on the border of the city centre.

Figure 61. Axis from Bogotá's centre to El Dorado airport: expedient mobilization © MB

As we have seen, the CAN project generated a controversy, as did the international airport of Bogotá. But each project was presented independently, and was usually addressed at different moments.

Piedrahita's reports on the project in the media, and additional details in the annual report to the Congress, suggested that the proposal to generate satellite cities which would act as poles of attraction on the west was originally taken from studies by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia under the rectorship of Gerardo Molina (1944-1948). By claiming that the proposal originated from within the institution where its most energetic opposition was concentrated, the government aimed to reduce resistance to it.

From the 1930s Bogotá had experienced linear growth, parallel to its eastern mountains. The terrains on the west made construction in these areas difficult and more expensive, being subject to periodic flooding and river overflows. But linearity was causing struggles and inefficiencies: the purpose was to balance towards the west "the linear condition of a city of 16 kilometres length and 2.5 wide". ("Centro Administrativo Oficial, Piedrahita interviewed" 1954) This was already considered by Le Corbusier's Pilot Plan as an "an abnormal extension". However, Le Corbusier's plan focuses on the downtown area, timidly indicating, without development, the possibility of satellite cities to the west, and without proposing alternative solutions to the unbalanced growth.¹⁴⁶

Although the idea of creating a more regular form sounds appealing, one can suggest other reasons for the regime's strategy. Some of the arguments presented to justify the development outside the centre were related to institutional security. Since the beginning of the city, the downtown area had congregated all the power forces not only of the city, but also of the country. Indeed, Bogotá until then had retained the political, governmental, religious, military, and financial headquarters in an area measuring less than four square kilometres. It was therefore deemed highly vulnerable after the experience of the Second World War, once aerial attacks acquired a prominent role in warfare, and at the local level, after the destruction caused by the

¹⁴⁶ Cf (Arias Lemos et al. 2005; Vargas Caicedo 1987; O'Byrne et al. 2010)

sprawl of violence after the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, referred to in Chapter 1.

El Dorado International Airport was a proposal made by Rojas after he had been director of the Civil Aviation Department. Dora Clement de Piedrahita (2011), amongst others, asserts Bogotá's airport was initially designed by Rojas as his final work at Indiana University. There is, however, no clear information about the acquisition of the terrains, or to what extent such sketches, if they exist, influenced the final project that was publically presented as designed by a Colombian practice, Cuellar Serrano Gomez.¹⁴⁷ What is more intriguing at this point is to consider its location in the city.

The western areas of the urban centre were at the time mostly agricultural land, only connected with the route to Mosquera. The Airport of 57,000m² was located in Fontibón, i.e., a different town. Next to it were built two additional facilities: cargo and military air terminals. In the eyes of critics such as Alberto Lleras, who became Colombia's president in 1958, it was "one of the Pharaonic works of the dictatorship", meaning El Dorado airport was an unreasonable distance away from Bogotá, and the whole project of an unnecessary magnitude. In other words: colossal. I contend that the decision about the airport represented one of the most important measures the regime took in relation to urban administration. It was to promote an aspiration that had been proposed for economic reasons since the 1930s: the integration of the annex towns to Bogotá, in what was named as the 'Special District'. This was formed by Fontibón, Soacha, Engativa, Bosa, Usaquén, and Suba. This approach gives additional elements of consideration to the ones recently addressed in the research of Marco Cortes Diaz (2006).¹⁴⁸

The tension generated between the downtown area and the new international airport of the city created in turn an axis of development that has provoked recent scholarly interest.¹⁴⁹ This axis brings together three of the most visible state projects in the city during the 1950s: the International Financial Centre in the immediate outskirts

¹⁴⁷ In the monograph about this practice, Germán Téllez denies Rojas involvement in the airport project. See (Téllez Castañeda 1988)

¹⁴⁸ Cortes Diaz' research compiles the information about this integration from the rationale of the city administration, and relates it to the master plans of the city.

¹⁴⁹ One of the most influential documents is Juan Carlos del Castillo Daza (2002)

of the downtown area (1950-1982), the CAN conglomerate (1953), and the International Airport El Dorado (1955).¹⁵⁰ In other words, the axis brought together: the financial centre, the political centre, and the civic and military airport. Such an avenue appears to correspond to a rapid evacuation strategy for the city.

4.2. Modern aspiration

Even if an incipient modernism was gaining ground from the 1930s through private and elite housing projects, it is interesting to see how there was a turning point in the 1950s in favour of a consolidation of modernist architecture. My contention is that the quantity and variety of projects of the National Plan of Public Works were fundamental in fostering the consolidation of a modernist image in different regions and for broader purposes.

The regime's discourse of a more egalitarian, cohesive, and secure society found a synergy with postulates of the modern movement. Indeed, the political argument was conveniently reinforced by the enthusiastic architectural realm, the prominent historian Jorge Arango claimed: "architecture in Colombia is neither in the hands of a group of snobs, nor supported by the state, contemporary architecture in Colombia is a popular movement". (Jorge Arango et al. 1953, 33) Nevertheless, considering the initial modernist projects, claims for popularity seem debatable.

For the government, the modern image conveniently responded to the demands of various groups of society. On one hand, it was presented to elites as part of the euphoria about infrastructural development on equal terms with more advanced countries. On the other, as Valerie Fraser (2004) has pointed out, it was portrayed for

¹⁵⁰ Recently, these projects have been subject of monographic researches. Cf the doctoral research by María Pia Fontana at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya analyses modern forms in Bogotá in the mid-twentieth century through the financial centre.(Fontana et al. 2012) Final work of architectural studies by Natalia Londoño and Edwin Alejandro Soto Villada (2008) about the urban impact generated by the Bogotá's airport, which was awarded as outstanding final works for undergraduate students Universidad Nacional de Colombia

the masses as “cultural experimentation that challenged traditional Eurocentrism”, commonly associated with the elites.

▪ **Modern image**

Latin America was keen to explore modernity in architecture. South American countries engaged politically with social change. What has not necessarily been evident though, is how “governments of quite different persuasions sponsored networks of public schools and hospitals, extensive housing schemes and university cities, and dared to do so in an uncompromisingly modern language”. (Fraser 2004)

The Colombian government was eager to integrate the most advanced techniques, images and discourses. The nation-building plan aimed to materialize progress, and relate to international dynamics. The case under discussion is nevertheless very different from that of Brasilia which was also designed and constructed during this period (1953-1960) and which remains the region’s best-known example of nation-building through the language of modernism. The scholar Jorge Ramírez Nieto (2011), in the interview we had, has pointed out that Juscelino Kubitschek’s modern projects were an explicit call to build the Brazilian identity; they aimed at taking control of a vast inhabited territory.¹⁵¹ The ‘*Anthropophagite Manifesto*’¹⁵² summarized the Brazilian strategy towards the unavoidable European influence, recreating it with local traditions.

A different case was represented by Juan Domingo Perón’s regime in Argentina, which assumed a more conservative posture in terms of state image. The country indeed underwent modernization, but the language was moderate – an aspiring neoclassic style – assuming in the late 1940s an explicit state position against abstraction in art.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Complementary information can be found in (Ramírez Nieto 1995)

¹⁵² In 1928, Oswald Andrade promoted cultural cannibalism as a method to recreate foreign influence into an appropriate product. Extended studies have addressed this subject. Cf (Ramírez Nieto 2000) (Tauxe 1996)

¹⁵³ See (Giunta 1997), (Andermann et al. 2005).

In addition to the influences from Europe, there was a simultaneous – and more aggressive – influence from the United States, as noted by Valerie Fraser (2004):

During the 1940s and 1950s contemporary US art was promoted in Latin America via the touring shows organized by the MoMA as part of the Cold War propaganda offensive. These exhibitions sought to promote US art and to make a strict division between figurative and abstract art, or as the US authorities saw it, between politically motivated social realism and political neutral abstraction, which was in turn presented as a choice between the old-fashioned and the modern.

The cultural exchange in the continent shaped different strategies to resist such polarization, and even with the opposition of alternative trends, for instance, what was denoted as '*indigenismo*'.¹⁵⁴ Consequently this Latin Americanist also highlights how "Art and architecture in Latin America are interesting in their selective appropriations and manipulations, for their originality rather than their dependence." (Fraser 2004) In brief, there was not a passive reception of modernism.

Despite the large number, diversity, and impact of these infrastructural projects which both Colombian and foreign architects developed throughout the country, the adoption of accepted modernist forms did not follow, or attempt to develop, an identifiable national style. In other words, modern architecture was not used to embody a new national identity in Colombia. The projects were presented to the community merely as facilities rather than salient monuments of the "new state". Paradoxically, the military government had little interest in promoting, or permitting, the identification of these projects as constituents of the national identity. Certainly, neither communities nor scholars have considered these projects as a valid national representation.

If anything, in the case of Colombia, these state projects were to some extent invisible or at least self-effacing. They served as tools of power for an increasingly unpopular military government, not only providing necessary services, but also being camouflaged posts of control. Their invisibility eased the insertion of these projects into

¹⁵⁴ *Indigenismo* was an artistic and literary movement that began in México, aiming to call attention to the indigenous legacy and participation in society in the first decades of the twentieth century.

the growing cities. It also defined the way the community related to them. There was no appreciation of them as landmarks of progress. Functionally, these projects provided much needed infrastructure, and people used them. What is more, most of these buildings are still in use. However, tellingly, communities have not developed any sense of reference or belonging with them. We will return to this point in Chapter 7.

▪ Definition of parameters

The archives of the Direction of National Buildings of the Ministry of Public Works contain no specific guidelines for the projects of the National Plan of Public Works. Nevertheless, presenting the advances achieved on the first anniversary of the regime, Rojas made clear the image that was being pursued:

Rather than challenging skyscrapers and opulent works, this government prefers the multiplicity of small and medium-sized projects, basic public infrastructure being brought to the nine hundred towns and villages of the country, and the benefits of social assistance to the most deprived countryside areas and cities.¹⁵⁵ (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 38)

More explicitly: public buildings were meant to be accessible as facilities to provide modern services to the community, but they should not be remarkable as landmarks. Considering the examples of other authoritarian regimes, this remains perhaps one of the most surprising particularities of the Colombian case.

In order to understand the practice of the time, I have interviewed some of the most prominent practitioners who were junior architects of the 1950s.¹⁵⁶ Their testimony provided relevant observations about how the corporate practice within the

¹⁵⁵ Also found in *Colombia en Marcha*, one of the regime's reports of achievements. It is common to find fragments of speeches that are included repeatedly in different editions of the DIPE.

¹⁵⁶ I am indebted to the generosity of architects who gave me their time and efforts to enrich this research with their insights. They were significant junior architects in the 1950s: Hernando Tapia (1937-2011), Edgar Bueno Tafur (n.d.), Germán Téllez Castañeda (b.1933), Germán Samper Gnecco (b.1924), Hernán Vieco (1925-2012), Dicken Castro (b. 1923).

small studios of engineers and architects began. Understandably, there are some inaccuracies and contradictions in their efforts to recall memories from more than 50 years ago. I have therefore cross-checked the information obtained in this way both with material from other interviewees and with other sources.

According to the interview we had with Carlos Niño Murcia (2011), the regime usually defined the function of a project, without providing a specific programme. Officially, state projects aimed to reach the majority of the population with hygienic, economic, modern buildings, but these were centrally designed by young architects. Most of these practices were located in Bogotá and operated from there in other regions of the country, which might imply that in some cases their knowledge of a particular site was limited; as Dicken Castro (2011) mentioned, “More often than not, the demands designers were addressing were speculative, rather than based on actual needs.” In this respect, Hernán Vieco (2011) added, “As these practices did not have wide experience of some of the functions, this allowed a relevant practice of that time: experimentation and exploration based on the avid reading of international journals.”

In addition to the location of infrastructural projects in the outskirts of the urban areas, which I have already mentioned, Vieco, Samper, and Téllez made reference in the interviews to how dispersed the projects were. The government assigned for these projects specific sites that, according to the architects of the time, were never discussed or consulted on with the designers. While the regime’s discourse was aimed simultaneously at the construction of a new nation and at modern progress, in the practice of architecture it was engaged in as an opportunity for innovation according to international standards. Perhaps without presenting the opportunity to ask many questions, the National Plan of Public Works was tackled as a technical and aesthetic concern.

▪ **Who built them**

Given the number of projects of the National Plan of Public Works, the question about the people involved is almost unanswerable. Historical data that provides explicit information about professionals, companies, and labour is inconsistent and incomplete. I have therefore taken information from some of the regime’s reports, payrolls, reports of cooperation, correspondence of foreign agencies, lists of authorized companies, and

registers in the media. This has allowed me to present an image of people involved in the design and construction of the most well-known projects; the account does not, however, pretend to be complete or detailed.

As far as I can establish, architectural practice changed from individual established professionals to small collectives of young architects and engineers. It is well known that, during the mid-twentieth century, there was a change in the most frequent names in charge of these projects. There was a move away from prominent names from the previous decades, such as Alberto Manrique Martín, Martínez Cárdenas, Herrera Carrizosa, among others. From the late 1940s one can identify new smaller firms gaining prominence. Cases in point are: Obregón & Valenzuela; Pizano Pradilla Caro; Herrera Nieto Cano; Domus (Pizano, Bermudez, Vieco); Ortega, Solano & Gaitán; Esguerra, Sáenz, Urdaneta & Suarez (joined by Samper in the 1950s); Samper & Castro; Cuellar, Serrano, Gómez; Ritter & Mejía; Violi & Lanzetta; Borrero, Zamorano y Giovanelli; Ricaurte, Carrizosa, Prieto; HM Rodríguez e Hijos; Arango & Murtra, and others.¹⁵⁷ Remarkably, most projects of the Plan were in the hands of these small practices, despite their lack of experience in similar projects. Jorge Arango (1953) affirmed: “young architects design young architecture”. One could rephrase this as “new architects design new architecture”. Rojas ratified this, emphatically announcing: “Our National movement ought to support a young generation which is solid and ambitious of great destinies, able to engage in an historic endeavour.” (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 175)

In identifying these actors, there are other aspects to consider. The majority of these practices included Colombian professionals who had studied abroad. The first school of architecture in Colombia had been founded in 1936, but even in the 1950s most head designers of these practices had studied in universities in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Chile.¹⁵⁸ Tellingly, there was a continuous exchange with the new developments in

¹⁵⁷ Along with these practices were engineers that closely interacted and participated in projects at that time. Unfortunately this activity has not been acknowledged or widely registered. Some of the related professionals were: Guillermo Gonzales Zuleta, Doménico Parma; and some were engineer architects such as Juvenal Moya.

¹⁵⁸ Arango and Martínez, as well as later historians, have pointed out this information. However, specific data about which universities they attended, or the particular influence this brought is still a pending matter of study. Cf (Silvia Arango 1996), (Saldarriaga Roa 1986)

architecture in a period marked by changing discourses and the after-effects of wartime.

This flow of information was reinforced through the immigration to Colombia of foreign, mainly European, architects during both World Wars. They actively participated in the local academia and, more interestingly, in the government. Indeed, the main consultant of the Ministry of Public Works was the German architect Leopoldo Rother.¹⁵⁹ In 1984, Hans Rother published a compilation of works of his father, in which the foreword by Carlos Martínez described him as:

Professor of all the cohorts of architects of faculties in Bogotá, active researcher, reader, [...] energetic worker, *either collaborator or author of the majority of the Ministry of Public Works' projects in the last two decades*. [My emphasis] (Rother 1984)

Nevertheless, the information about this period in the archive of the Ministry of Public Works does not clarify the precise way in which professionals were linked to the Ministry and what their specific responsibilities were. There is, however, the evidence of payments to professionals hired from other disciplines and thus integrated in the design and construction of the plan's projects, including landscape designers, artists, and, interior designers.

Figure 62. Payments to individuals in administrative files of Ministry of Public Works ©AGN

Through debates about the participation of national and foreign firms in these projects which appeared in the media, it is clear that foreign companies were also taking part in the development of some of the Plan's projects. Such participation was justified as an aspect of technical cooperation, either because of the direct funding, or on account of the implementation of new technologies.

¹⁵⁹ Most studies about Leopoldo Rother were undertaken by his son Hans Rother (1984)

The historical information presented here demonstrates that, at the time of the increase in architectural infrastructure projects, the government was keen to promote new ideas about the built environment. The relevant projects were entrusted to a new generation of professionals who introduced an architecture that corresponded to international practices. Questions then arose about how these projects were commissioned, or what kind of information they received.

• **How they were commissioned**

Information about the direct commission or public contest to assign projects of the National Plan of Public Works is unclear, as one might expect at this point. Some debates were recorded in the media, and in the minutes of both the Societies of Architects and of Engineers. In recent studies, these controversies have been repeated and differences in interpretation are noticeable. In the history of the Colombian Chamber of Construction – Camacol – which was compiled by Oscar Alfonso Roa (2007), it is argued that the most difficult point on the relationships with the government was reached during the Rojas regime; while the scholar Hernando Vargas (2011) acknowledges that in August 1953, two months after the beginning of the regime:

[T]he second national convention of engineers took place, and Archila Briceño, president of the association, spoke against the procedures of the former government on [assigning] roads commissions. Firstly, he claimed that plans and projects of public works were solely done by foreign engineers, and for organisms in which Colombian engineers were not represented.

In the report of the Dictatorship's first six months in power, Rojas pledged support for Colombian professionals and enterprises:

Deserving all support and encouragement by the state will be the capital that prospects, creates, and executes productive enterprises, [...] that offers the technique of experts, as well as the ability and devotion of workers, to produce essential assets.
(Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953d, 19)

Considering the creation and active presence of new companies, not only during the period of the regime, but afterwards, (Roa 2007) one could assume that the following government effectively encouraged circles of Colombian professionals to become involved with projects of the National Plan of Public Works.

• **Participation of foreign architectural and engineering firms**

It is clear, however, that along with foreign aid came the involvement of foreign experts and companies. In some cases this information was widely publicized. This was not always the case, however, as inconsistencies regarding both the projects themselves and who was involved in them were common.

Figure 63. Advertisement of US firms and innovative materials used in Colombia, Military hospital Bogotá ©Architectural Forum

During the Cold War, US companies that were acting abroad were registered annually; they required a security clearance to cooperate on projects in various countries, and with US funding. In relation to the built environment, I found that during the 1950s more engineering firms than architectural practices were authorized to work in Colombia. Amongst others, in the directories of US firms operating abroad the following companies were involved in the country's projects: Armco Steel Co, Morrison-Knudson Corp, Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton Engineering Co, Raymond Concrete Pile Co, Thompson & Merritt, Frederick Snare Corp, R J Tipton Associates, Utah Construction Co.¹⁶⁰ (Angel et al. [1955] -1960)

Figure 64. Experts visit, reported in the media: Paul Lester, Le Corbusier, Josep-Lluís Sert © El Tiempo,

The foreign presence in Colombia was not only represented by companies working there temporarily; there was also a common phenomenon of immigration to

¹⁶⁰ Others firms are reported to work in previous years: Town Planning Ass., Skidmore Owings & Merrill, Cia Constructora Groves-Drake Inc, Bethlehem Steel Co, Merritt Chapman & Scott.

Latin America both during and after the World Wars. In the census of 1951, the number and distribution of foreigners is not insignificant and their contribution would be worth investigating further. The census data reports that, after Germany, countries such as the United States, Spain, Italy, Venezuela, and Ecuador had more than 7,094 immigrants to Colombia between 1952 and 1974. (Asociación Colombiana para el estudio de la población -ACEP 1974) The higher proportion was located in areas of industrial and urban growth: Bogotá, Valle, Atlántico, Caldas, and the Eastern plains. Correspondingly, one can trace foreign engineers and architects not only connected to local schools, but undertaking some of the projects of the National Plan of Public Works. Perhaps the most prominent cases, to name but a few, were: the Spaniards Fernando Martínez Sanabria and José de Recasens, the Italians Vicente Nasi and Bruno Violi, and the German Leopoldo Rother. Their imprint in academia, and in particular in the Universidad Nacional and the Ministry of Public Works, has been acknowledged individually. Recent scholarly work has taken a new interest in their legacy.¹⁶¹

• **Role of foreigners in the Ministry of Public Works and university**

It is not then surprising that both foreign and national professionals in Colombia were informed, or even educated, in relevant international practices. In terms of the built environment, the permanent flow of information and people ensured a connection with contemporary trends elsewhere.¹⁶² There were two crucial settings for this connection: on the one hand, schools of architecture, in particular la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, along with other more recent and private universities located in Bogotá and Cali,¹⁶³ and on the other, the Ministry of Public Works.

¹⁶¹ Within the Master program in Architecture at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, a renewed interest about these architects has recently produced a number of works. Cf (Castellanos Garzón et al. 2010), (Rodríguez Botero 2007), (Parra Escobar 2010), (Rojas Farias 2007)

¹⁶² I will address in Chapter 6 the media used in the exchange of information.

¹⁶³ During the 1950s, universities such as Javeriana, Andes, and Valle aimed to reach a similar level to the Nacional, including the international state of art of the discipline.

Results of the extensive research undertaken by the scholar Carlos Niño Murcia, based on the archives of the Ministry of Public Works, have shown how the Ministry was a laboratory for the exploration of new languages and techniques. Interestingly, Niño has pointed out that there were changes even in the work of the most traditional architects; for instance:

Even [Angiolo] Mazzoni, in 1954, designed a rationalist project marking a change in his position about which it is difficult to establish if this change was produced by his own conviction, or due to [governmental] pressure – which might be strong – prevailing on the realm. (Niño Murcia 1991)

Academia and Ministry played complementary roles. The former was the place of introduction, learning, and diffusion of the most recent trends within professional circles and in the main cities; and the latter, as the largest constructor in the country, was the laboratory for testing these ideas, and for applying them in different contexts and regions. According to the scholar William Vasquez Rodriguez (2013) at least half of the staff members of the school of architecture in Universidad Nacional de Colombia, were foreigners during the first decades of the programme in architecture, i.e. 1930s-1950s. New ideas and practices were widely introduced over a short period of time, and heavily supported by Germany, including not only the provision of academic material, but supplies for models.

▪ **New materials and techniques**

One can identify as a common ground in the regime's discourse and the professionals' approach an interest in improving living standards. Within the restrictions appropriate to the time, technical aspects were key to the actual implementation of the Plan.

In this sense, the architect Hernando Tapia (2010) mentioned in his last interview how part of the local adaptations involved the need to find alternative ways to deal with two main concerns: "ventilation and sun protection, especially given the tropical conditions of the country". He claimed that a common solution involved a combination of traditional features with a modern image, through brise-soleils,

airbricks, patios, and orientation. Because of the wide variety of climates in the country, a different range of adaptive resources is required, and in some cases is just introduced as formalist fashion.

In relation to building materials, Adrian Forty (2012b) focuses his latest research on how concrete was an international resource. In order to achieve a modern image, other “new materials” – namely iron, marble, and glass – were in high demand. I will associate this also with data found about how the government awarded special subsidies to constructions which used concrete and other new materials. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Differently perhaps from other governments in the post-war years, rather than controlling and restricting the provision of cement, the regime endorsed national cement industries, and the use of this material in public and private projects. Either exposed concrete, or white or light-coloured walls, were frequent in state buildings, generating ambivalent reactions from users such as the one reported in the media by the Brazilian architect and footballer Otavio de Moraes (1952) about a recently opened project: “the Campín [the Bogotá stadium] seems an unfinished work”.

Although concrete structures were the most common, Arango notes:

In a few cases there is a [complete] metallic structure. Colombia does not [massively] produce steel. But there are factories producing minor structures, window frames, and other non-mechanical pieces of construction. (Jorge Arango et al. 1953)

But this was set to change. At the time the Colombian government was undertaking a cooperation initiative with the French government, to build the largest steel factory in Latin America: Paz del Rio in Boyacá, “opening the path to total economic and political independence”. (Andermann et al. 2005) The company and plan were set in 1948, but were only operative from 1954, when the regime urged its production.

Another interesting peculiarity to consider here is that the work force arrived with rural migration. Labour was plentiful and knowledgeable about such traditional techniques as *tapia pisada*, and about brick production and masonry. Further studies should be developed, but notably, USOM (1948-1961) reports on housing, highlighted that this traditional knowledge informed the research undertaken by the CINVA (1951-

1972) concerning their interest in modulating and industrializing construction processes. Experimental techniques such as the *cinvaram*¹⁶⁴ are evidence of this. Considering the incipient industry of the country to mass-produce materials, *cinvaram* technique allowed rapid and economical construction in remote areas. However, it was not entirely popular as it was seen as earth, an undervalued traditional resource, instead of “being made of material”, that is: concrete, a modern resource.

In terms of the technical aspects of the modern architecture, therefore, one can consider that there was a degree of cultural and material distinctiveness. However, this was never explicitly addressed, but rather led by resources.

4.3. Reading the National Plan of Public Works

What was confusingly presented as a National Plan of Public Works does indeed correspond with modern postulates of well-being, progress and social inclusion. However, the social and historical context at the time also called for control. This control was directed not only towards “dangerous ideas” that were gaining ground in the region, but was particularly concerned with control over the territory. The improvement of living standards and the construction of a “new nation” were vehicles to exert such control while minimizing resistance to the regime. In this way, the non-existent Plan was a soft power strategy that tinted down hard decisions of the dictatorship.

Thinking about infrastructure, the strategy becomes evident, as the scholar Montserrat Guibernau i Berdún (2006) discusses about the modernizing enterprise in Latin America:

It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of transport and communications, not just for social mobility and interaction,

¹⁶⁴ A compressed-earth brick. The block adopted the name from the manual machine used to produce it.

but as a multiplier of the military power of the state and the facilitator of a national press.

The provision of modern facilities, I would argue, aimed to work in parallel in different directions. Firstly, it aimed at an improvement in living standards and the provision of suitable infrastructure for industrial development, as was widely publicized. Simultaneously and no less importantly, it was an instrument to camouflage posts of control in peri-urban areas, while conveniently gaining some popular acceptance of the increasingly repressive regime.

Having clarified that the so-called National Plan of Public Works was more a strategy than an actual plan, it is then relevant to explore more possible explanations for “these random projects”. So the proposal here is to examine official reports, media and internal information of the entities involved in order to identify possible connections – and perhaps a general system that might make sense at different scales.

▪ **What were the Plan’s priorities?**

In a way, the National Plan of Public Works not only focused on, but also represented, the fragmentation of the country, and its contradictions. It promised material improvement through the implementation of modern facilities such as hospitals, schools, university campuses, banks, markets, national buildings, SENA (polytechnic centres), SENDAS buildings (social assistance programme for rural areas and marginal communities), military bases, airports, ports, clubs, libraries and hotels, but these were under construction both before and after the dictatorship. The point is that during the regime their priorities and rationale were not apparent to the architects, nor to the community, and yet the transformation of the built environment, and the construction industry, were both greater and faster.

Figure 65. Pablo Tobón Uribe Hospital under construction on the outskirts of Medellín © Gabriel Carvajal

Oddly enough, projects highlighted in the Ministry of Public Works’ reports of 1956-1957 were: the Heroes’ monument in Bogotá, the extension of a “tourism” hotel in Popayan, university campuses in Popayan, Bucaramanga, and Pamplona, Colegio

Salesiano Zapatoca, National Buildings in Riohacha, Monteria, and Barranquilla, and the Palace of Justice in Tunja, Banco Republica's libraries and Caja Agraria. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957)

A wider picture is necessary in order to understand these projects and to identify their priorities. With this in mind, we need to go back to one of the reported influences on the plan, namely the "Basis of a Development Program for Colombia", also known as the Currie Mission.¹⁶⁵ In a recent history of the World Bank, the scholar Michele Alacevich (2009) highlights the importance of the Currie Mission began in 1949, as the "first comprehensive economic survey mission [abroad]" ever undertaken by the bank. The historian identifies the 14 advisors who were commissioned to advise Colombia on development projects concerning agriculture, industry, transportation (railroads, highways and waterways), public facilities, energy, health and welfare.¹⁶⁶

Among these advisors, Alacevich identifies some controversial connections.¹⁶⁷ Haywood (Woody) R. Faison, head of the economy section, simultaneously participated as a member of the board of aviation of the US Defense Department. Carl W. Fletcher, appearing as an expert on industry and energy, was the former director of the US Maritime Commission. David Livingstone Gordon, who acted as the expert on public facilities, authored in 1947 "The hidden weapon: the story of economic warfare". Joseph L. White was a former member of the transport office at the US Defense Department. Espionage questions about the director of the Mission, Lauchlin Currie himself, who was not only linked to prominent circles in Washington but to the Soviet intelligence, have already been extensively documented.¹⁶⁸ Obviously, during the Cold War the concern about security was part of the agenda of multilateral organizations, but it was not openly included. One can see how the improvement of living standards

¹⁶⁵ I chose to focus on the Currie mission rather than Lebret, as it had more prominence at the time within the country, and there is a growing literature about it.

¹⁶⁶ Lauchlin Currie, Gordon Grayson, Haywood R. Faison, David L. Gordon, Richard A. Musgrave, Jacques Torfs, Frederick C. Gill, Joseph White, Carl W. Fleisher, Juan de Dios Ceballos, Jaime F. Cordoba, Roger V. Anderson, Juan Antonio Montoya, Wilford E. Johns, Joseph W. Mountin.

¹⁶⁷ One should note that some of the roles of the members within the mission are reported differently by sources. cf (Tijerina 2011), (Ibanez Najar 1990), (Meisel Roca 1990)

¹⁶⁸ Studies about Currie's participation in Latin American politics have possible links as a source of Soviet intelligence, during his time in charge of the prolonged World Bank Mission in Colombia, after acting as White House Advisor. See more details in (Sandilands 2009), and (Andrew et al. 1999)

served diverse interests: some were national ambitions, and others were international anxieties.

▪ **Network of Airports**

Airport terminals were presented in official reports and the media as essential modern infrastructure that would service the country's aviation industry. Arguably, Colombia developed the first commercial airline of the continent in the 1910s and, what is more, since 1945 Colombia had direct flights to the United States, France and Spain.¹⁶⁹ Air transport constituted a rapid and economical alternative in a country with challenging geographical conditions. Additionally, there are two relevant facts: Rojas not only had a previous education himself as a civil engineer, but had also acted in 1945 as head of the Aviation Department, which might also explain his particular desire to develop a nationwide network of airports. Once more, in the case of airports, as in other state projects developed by the dictatorship, the national media described these projects as necessary works of progress, while raising questions about their apparently random location.

Indeed, the question of where to locate more than 20 air terminals was not clear-cut. In the mid-twentieth century Colombia was predominantly rural. Apart from Bogotá, the three major cities of Medellín, Cali and Barranquilla had less than 500,000 inhabitants.¹⁷⁰ These urban centres were encompassed along with middle-size cities, as well as an ambitious number of towns in more distant regions, including in the most violent areas and on the international borders, as is the case of the San Andres Islands in front of Nicaragua. (Piedrahita 1955)

Internally there was only one public report by the Ministry of Public Works showing the network of airports at the national level. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Documents from the Aviation Department itself have disappeared, so it is not known if there was ever a detailed aeronautical plan within the institution. What can be

¹⁶⁹ Flights of DC-6 and Constellations had to stopover either at Bahamas, or Azores islands to reach Europe.

¹⁷⁰ DANE census of 1951 reported in ACEP, *La población de Colombia*, Committee for International Coordination of National Research in Demography, 1974

done, given the extant documents, is to relate the report of the Ministry of Public Works to the cooperation documents from the US Civil Aviation Mission.

Rojas introduced the network as part of the record of achievements in 1954, with a sudden and apparently illogical remark: “the multiple air terminals will conveniently develop tourism, which is the fundamental basis of national defence”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 90)

The construction of Colombian air terminals received significant support from international cooperation through the US Civil Aviation Mission (Institute of Inter-American Affairs. Administrative Office 1953), which was part of the Point Four Program. Interestingly, the locations of airports belonging to the national network coincide with the terminals of the Plan defined by the US War Department in 1945. (US Mutual Security Program 1951) For instance, in a recently declassified item of information, I have found data of the budget drawn up for the airport of Barranquilla, one of the priority locations to secure the Caribbean within the Continental defence plan.

Figure 66. Civil airports development was a War department programme, and this map shows the priorities in the Caribbean zone © NARA

Most information about how these projects were defined or commissioned is unclear. Registers in the media claimed Colombian architectural practices developed these projects. This is contradicted, however, by the official bodies representing architects and engineers in Colombia, who complained to the government about being excluded from these projects and requesting more participation. (Ramírez Nieto 2011) The annual reports of the Ministry of Public Works confirm that foreign firms were involved in the development of some terminals and runways ([Colombian government] 1951-1957). Nevertheless, specific links between many projects and firms are difficult to trace because most of the contracts were in the names of individuals, rather than companies.

Some Colombian professionals worked on designing runways and terminals, although not in the principal cities. This was the case of engineer-architect Hernando Velasco who had studied in France in the late 1920s and early 1930s, but Velasco

noted that most of the archives of his and others' work on airports was burned in the fire of the Avianca building in Bogotá in 1972. (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

Similarly, it is unclear how decisions were made about the location and design of projects; the beginning of their construction was sudden. Only a small percentage of these terminals were fully built and functioning by 1957, when the military government fell. As was reported in a special issue of *Escola* about the air terminals in Colombia ("Aeropuertos" 1971), some of them were concluded years later according to the initial plans. The language and techniques on these projects contained constant references to similar terminals elsewhere.

Figure 67. Blueprint of a Colombian airport: the journal compared it with contemporary international developments © ESCALA

These built projects were rapidly incorporated into urban dynamics. The communities received them with satisfaction; one airport, the one in San Andres Islands, even still today bears the name of the dictator, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. Functionally, they satisfied much needed transportation connections and, at the urban level, they defined areas of extension and development in the cities. Nevertheless, at this point, I will consider the national level only for the purposes of understanding the overall network.

Indeed, the network of airports ended up playing a key role at the national level, as it integrated more distant areas, thus assuring state presence and territorial control in isolated zones, even in small towns, where air traffic was practically non-existent. Additionally, the network also aimed at a reconfiguration of air connections of the South of the continent. As is possible to see in this map from 1955, all the transatlantic flights began to be directed through US territory. In this sense, it might be important to pursue similar studies in other countries of the continent, tracing other air terminals, now that the information has been declassified.

Figure 68. Image of Latin America routes reconfigured: Colombia as a hub, and intercontinental flights via the United States © DIPE

▪ Construction of cities

However, the dictatorship – under the image of a “welfare state” – developed different projects from the ones expected also on an urban scale; for instance, they did not follow the Pilot Plan for the capital city, Bogotá, designed by Le Corbusier and complemented by Paul Lester Wiener and Joseph Louis Sert. The Pilot Plan proposed to raise urban density and redevelop the centre of the city.

José Salazar Ferro (2007), perhaps one of the most prominent urban planners, a practitioner and a scholar, emphatically claims in a recent article, talking about the development of Bogotá at that time:

[Urban and architectural] works of the so-called dictatorships of the mid-1950s in the city could be considered as a return to projects without a plan. Not “capricious” projects [...], but conceived individually in the city, however framed in the “National Plan of Public Works”. [Quotation marks in the original text]

Following the method of Paul Jaskot (2001), who argues that there are connections between the image, materials and location of architectural projects of National Socialism in Germany, I located the highest budget projects built by this regime in Bogotá. Within these projects it is possible to identify a certain consistency, from which I would contend that they do not appear arbitrarily.

Data restriction

Data restriction

4.4. Agency of the Plan

The strategy of the National Plan of Public Works was quite complex, and operated for a long time. We have seen how, in the bigger picture, there were more continuities than disruptions. Perhaps the Plan was only a small piece in a larger machine. Despite the corruption and manipulation, by no means all of what it attempted was pernicious: equality, progress, autonomy, education, security, and legitimacy. Given the challenging conditions of Colombia, one can appreciate the enterprise undertaken.

Through infrastructural projects, Piedrahita interprets the regime as the promoter of a national resurgence towards a better future under “wider criteria, more

¹⁷¹ A clear example of projects that began before the regime, but which received a boost during that period is the Military hospital in Bogotá.

logical, more technical, and more modern". (Piedrahita 1955, 25) And the so-called National Plan of Public Works represented a suitable opportunity to reach "development possibilities and [a] national exaltation", as the minister claimed. The issue here is that, despite the "not-deplorable" agency of the Plan, it neglected potential complications because of strategies implemented to avoid explicitly addressing the security concerns.

▪ **Charming civil buildings**

Making use of soft power strategies, the regime multiplied its efforts to build different projects, avoiding justifying or explaining the rationale for them. One example of this can be drawn from the CAN controversy.

In its only public intervention into the controversy, the government put out a press release ("Centro Administrativo Oficial, Piedrahita interviewed" 1954) in which, instead of explaining the project of the CAN in terms of the security network created for the city, it adopted two tactics: on the one hand, presenting the logic of the location following on from former studies, i.e. Le Corbusier's pilot plan, without giving much detail about it, and making reference to its "modern principles"; and on the other, alleging an almost natural social resistance to change. This press release, Piedrahita documented how some of the most advanced works in the city had attracted the opposition and resistance of the community by pointing to other relevant examples: the national park, and the campus of the Universidad Nacional, which were projects built by opposition parties in recent decades. He highlighted, however, how these projects had substantially changed the urban development and had benefited the city, noting at the end that the regime was prepared to accept criticism in the name of "resistance to change". ("Centro Administrativo Oficial, Piedrahita interviewed" 1954) One can read this thus, as a "charm offensive" to minimize resistance while showcasing this project as a crucial one for the development not only of the city, but also of the country.

▪ Warfare as welfare operation

In order to implement the military regime's Plan, political strategies closely intertwined both soft power and psychological operations.¹⁷² Both General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla and Admiral Ruben Piedrahita Arango were well trained in such operations. Presumably, so were other high-ranking officials in the immediate circle as it is a prominent subject on their education. Therefore, to infer that the dictatorship was prone to use such tactics on the national level and to relate them to the core policy of the government seems reasonable. Entangled policies of welfare and warfare were materialized through the National Plan of Public Works. In other words, national and international concerns were simultaneously addressed.

Nevertheless, concerns and priorities did not necessarily match. The military strategy of the “credible truth” of the National Plan of Public Works, that for the Colombian regime heavily focused on consolidating progress and reinforcing nationhood, equated warfare with welfare. Yet, as might be expected, for the United States, i.e. the main foreign guide and actor in the country, internal concerns about the processes of nationalism could be dismissed, as can be seen in the internal records: “Nationalism in Latin America is a demagogic, highly emotional pressure which is now being exploited by all political elements, including both extremes.” (CIA 1958)

Figure 70. The CIA internal report on Socialism in Latin America illustrates how nationalism was seen by the US agency. ©CIA/FOIA

The systematic reference Rojas and his regime made of their nation-building programme to the National Plan of Public Works made these state projects the engine of nationalism. In the document presented as the report of the first year in power, the DIPE claimed:

[These state projects] originated from the deep will of the people, not as a political imposition or pressure. Otherwise, how many works could be inaugurated that would be worthless?

¹⁷² As a military practice it is still in use. Recent references can be found in (Shlaifer 2011), (June 2011), (Boyd 2007), (Kodosky 2007), (Osgood 2006)

They would be nothing but concrete, asphalt, or stone skeletons. (Piedrahita 1955)

Nicola Miller (2008) identifies how the consolidation of modern national identities in the twentieth century in Latin America follows a complex process, in which popular concerns and anti-imperialist feeling become intertwined. This partially coincides with the US report already mentioned. Admittedly, as the scholar Anthony D. Smith (1998) warns, the US involvement in the region has generated some resistance, unevenness, or alienation. Thus, given the indisputable, but not always explicit, US involvement in some projects of the Plan, questions arise about how this might have conditioned its effectiveness.

- **Catalytic purpose of built environment**

Basing my argument on archival findings, I therefore contend that the National Plan of Public Works concretized a complex strategy: a “double truth”. The regime used different tactics of industrial camouflage (as will be discussed more explicitly in Chapter 6), psychological operations, and soft power. In other words, the National Plan of Public Works not only followed the principles of civil defence, but also created false fronts, and fragmented data. This obscurity of information about the Plan was intended to make it difficult to identify possible connections, or reasons for particular projects related to welfare as much as to warfare. As we will see, most of the time, objects appeared random and improvised. This was a double game of visibility and invisibility. In Colombia, camouflaging strategies in the built environment took place on different and complementary levels. Such is the case of the Naval College.

Disseminating the ignorance about what the state agenda conveyed was part of the strategy. Drawn from tactics in use, one can synthesize that the National Plan of Public Works was used to accomplish different purposes. Most commonly, it was implemented to orientate a convenient interpretation of the phenomena. It also endorsed, or focused particular attention on, certain facts acting as decoys. It mediated in conflictive or sensitive issues. And lastly, information made public helped to catalyse social dynamics. In short, the manipulation of information was aimed at shaping processes of remembering, or forgetting, architectural and engineering projects.

Whilst the National Plan of Public Works did not explicitly exist, it was nevertheless a potent instrument of power. Indeed, it ensured that the four years of the Rojas dictatorship left a permanent imprint on Colombia's built environment, but the overall significance of such a massive number of buildings has been downplayed. It is an overlooked and unloved legacy. We cannot reconstruct exactly the discussions and decisions that led to the construction of particular projects; however, it is clear that the programme broadly served Rojas' and, by extension, American interests, both in terms of securing the regime's power and improving the continent's defensive capabilities.

It brings to mind Bourdieu's discussion of architecture's often "complicitous silence" in the political legitimisation of agendas. Drawing on which, Dovey (2008) summarizes: "[T]he more structures and representations of power can be embedded in the framework of everyday life; the less questionable they become, and the more effectively they can work."

Undeniably, one cannot expect to have an exposed military strategy. Even more during the Cold War, this being a latent conflict rather than an explicit war, high levels of secrecy were required, not only in relation to what was perceived as opponent governments, but also in relation to its own civilians. Therefore, the public strategy changed as it was projected as an image of progressiveness. Camouflaging became a powerful resource for the Rojas regime. At the same time, the public discourse was oriented to nation-building and incorporation into the universal modern world. Silent strategies were necessary to assure the national and international agenda.

In this sense, assuming that the "double truth" of an artefact aims to create a "mis-representation", obscuring its understanding and making it conflictive to develop some identity with it, this raises questions as to the implications of such "mis-representation".

5. The Naval College

The National Plan of Public Works covered infrastructural projects nationwide, by focusing on one prominent project in a middle-sized city the purpose is to test the national character of the Plan. Thus, in order to reach an architectural scale in this research, I have selected the Naval College “Almirante Padilla” in Cartagena de Indias as a case study. This architectural complex is a representative project of the National Plan of Public Works. Tellingly, as mentioned in Chapter 3, its model was the image on the catalogue cover of the exhibition of the regime’s plan, and it also occupies a prominent place at the show itself.

Based on the historical information found, my claim is that this project represents the sum of different interests for the government, namely: the provision of modern facilities such as academic spaces; the configuration of the expansion zones of growing cities; and the strengthening of the territory’s security. My contention is that the rationale and conditions for developing such a complex are representative of both the dictatorship’s strategy and the reception of these projects in the architectural realm, for reasons that will become clearer through my analysis.

5.1. Why build it?

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Colombia participated in the Korean War as a US ally (1950-1953). It was the first involvement of Colombia in an external international conflict. i.e. not related directly with the country. According to the naval historian Enrique Roman Bazurto (2005), after such involvement there was a sharp increase to the number of naval recruits in Colombia. In consequence the Naval Base “ARC Bolívar” became insufficient. Moreover, at the urban level, the location of this Naval Base on the outskirts of Cartagena’s colonial centre was considered inappropriate on account of the extension of new residential areas in Cartagena.¹⁷³ Therefore,

¹⁷³ Although further studies of the urban development of Cartagena are a pending matter, there is a preliminary study about the immediate extension of the historic centre. See (Samudio Trallero 1999)

developing a new Naval College was in the interests of both the national¹⁷⁴ and local governments.

Cartagena is a middle-sized city, but is of remarkable historical relevance. The location of the city has been crucial to the control of the Caribbean Sea since the sixteenth century. Thus, the regime's need to build a new Naval College proved an opportunity to produce an architectural object with outstanding characteristics, which in turn materializes the multiple and complicated politics of that time.

▪ What is a Naval College?

The institutional character of the project has relevant considerations. The Naval College Almirante Padilla is the academic institution of the Colombian Navy. The Navy was created in 1907¹⁷⁵ (Grau Araujo 1968) and is highly regarded by the local community, i.e. of Cartagena. It is commonly associated with social and cultural events, rather than with security issues. Despite the Navy being the only force that actively participated in two international wars, it is either the Army or the Police that covers security at the national level, and who are thus associated with military control. The presence of the Navy, by contrast, gives rise to little resistance from the general public as its main role is outward-facing.

Figure 71. Modern architectural complex © ENAP

Initially the institution carried out training on board vessels, but from the beginning of the twentieth century a constant growth in the number of recruits¹⁷⁶ made it necessary to have suitable installations. Historically, the actual demands of enrolment have exceeded institutional estimations, creating a permanent shortage of capacity. The first site was the Naval Base built, in the outskirts of the downtown, with

¹⁷⁴ The institutional history of the Colombian Navy has been the subject of study by former officials, such as (Roman Bazurto 1997), (Grau Araujo 1968).

¹⁷⁵ The Naval College was initially created by decree 783 July 6th, 1907. It was closed on December 28th, 1909, and opened again after the War with Peru in 1935

¹⁷⁶ There were two events that impacted the institution, making it more visible and attractive to enrol in: first, the Colombian war with Peru (1932-1933), and then the Colombian participation in the Korean War.

the support of the British Royal Navy in 1935.¹⁷⁷ (Roman Bazurto 1997) Due to restrictions of space, this was more a military base than an academic centre. Yet most of the training was carried out there. Soon after the construction of that site, it became insufficient to cover the population and programme, and moreover it defined a sharp border between the downtown and new residential areas.

Figure 72. Saturated space at the old naval college (1935) in the outskirts of the historic centre, which image resembles colonial features © Corredera magazine

The Navy's academic curriculum ([ENAP] [1953]) states that it aims to achieve a balance between technical, physical, and tactical instruction in a confined site. Discipline and hierarchy are crucial elements. At the time there were two career paths: maritime administration, and naval sciences.¹⁷⁸ Thus the College is both a military site, and an academic centre, which each require suitable spaces. This dual character makes the Naval College even more significant for the purposes of this research.

The perception of the institution informs the interpretation of the architectural complex, which is also telling about the relevance of the project for the regime. The Rojas dictatorship invested efforts in a prominent architectural project for a war command with a high level of social acceptance. Indeed, the Navy, as an institution, has been part of Cartagena's identity; contrary to its previous site, the new architectural complex is – still today – widely regarded as an academic centre, rather than as a military base.

• What information is available?

The architectural project of the Naval College is a significant piece of architecture, probably one of the most outstanding examples of modern Colombian architecture. At the same time, it is one of the least known. This is paradoxical, as it is

¹⁷⁷ Since its beginning and until 1950s, the Navy received strong support to define the formation and all the parameters of a military career from the British Royal Navy. The structure and academic programme of studies follows the British model.

¹⁷⁸ Later on other academic programmes were added such as naval engineering and oceanography.

definitely a clear presence of the state, and a permanent point of reference for the inhabitants of Cartagena. At this point a set of elements for consideration will be introduced and subsequently developed.

The architectural complex of the Naval College was the only state project of the military government reported on in *Proa*. (Martínez 1955) Not only the outstanding qualities of the architectural project might explain this inclusion. The friendship between the editor and Rafael Obregón, the chief designer of the project, may have been decisive in the case of that publication.

Figure 73. Along with pointing out the critical condition of urban growth, this issue highlights the architectural qualities of the ENAP project in Cartagena © Proa

Despite its selection in *Proa*, and its powerful presence in Cartagena, the Naval College has been barely mentioned in the later historiography of architecture in Colombia or Latin America. Exceptionally there are comments acknowledging the existence of the project, but no study or analysis of it.¹⁷⁹ For instance, though the architectural historian Carlos Niño's study about the Ministry of Public Works mentions the exhibition of the National Plan of Public Works, it does not mention the Naval College. (Niño Murcia 1991) It analyses other state projects, but even when listing academic or military works, the Naval College is omitted. This is also the case with other architectural histories.¹⁸⁰ There is, however, one short reference in the publication by Eduardo Samper,¹⁸¹ which is an effort to revalidate the "golden era".

Rafael and José Maria Obregón design (sic) the Naval Base (sic) in Cartagena, an enormous urban complex closed to the public. The layout is organized through covered corridors intertwining geometrically building volumes, in order to have a correct orientation and separation among them, aiming to have optimal ventilation and visibility. (Samper Martínez 2000, 99)

¹⁷⁹ cf (Téllez Castañeda 1998), (Silvia Arango 1989)

¹⁸⁰ cf (Saldarriaga Roa 1986), (Corradine Angulo et al. 2001)

¹⁸¹ Eduardo Samper Martínez is a son of Germán Samper Gnecco, architect at the time, and one of the possible participants in the project.

Despite the short reference to the existence of the Naval College, Samper includes one photograph of the College by the experienced architectural photographer Paul Beer. The inclusion of Beer's picture opens a lead to some information. Between the 1940s and 1970s, this German photographer¹⁸² was regularly commissioned both by architectural practices and by the government, to record its most outstanding projects.¹⁸³

At this point it is clear that the Naval College is a compelling object of study. The absence of data about it in the architectural history, and the traces found in the scarce references, makes it both challenging and valuable as a case study. In addition, I have found alternative sources for this research.

Information from the Ministry of Public Works collects some of the reports presented to the Congress annually, and the material of the ministry in the National Archives mentions only administrative and financial aspects that cannot be related to the project, which may explain its absence from Nino's study.¹⁸⁴ However, I have interviewed people who were linked with the Ministry of Public Works (or their relatives), and officials who were active the Navy at that time; scholars concerned in related subjects; senior architects including one of the College's designers, and other members of the architectural practice that designed it. Moreover, with the authorization of the General Command of the Navy, I have been on five occasions on site,¹⁸⁵ and consulted the internal archives of the Naval College related to its architecture. Through

Data restriction

¹⁸² Paul Beer (1904-1976) was born in Regensburg (Germany) and migrated to Colombia in 1923, where he became in the mid-twentieth century one of the most prominent photographers of ethnic groups and modern architecture.

¹⁸³ Without specific dates Germán Téllez mentioned a previous visit to the Naval College of the photographer Ezra Stoller, who might have been commissioned by the Rockefeller foundation or the Museum of Modern Art. However, these images have not been published so far. And in the case of Stoller, there is no reference to the existence of those images, but there are Stoller photos in O&V archives of other projects designed by the same practice.

¹⁸⁴ It is possible that the General Command of the Navy had also some material. However, the *Academia de Historia Naval* [Naval History Academy] holds its historical information, and I was not granted access to this material.

¹⁸⁵ I have done field work at the Naval College on 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013, and in one of them I stayed living on site for 15 days

Figure 74. ENAP classrooms: the complex's educational role seems prominent,
2008 © MPSB

5.2. Significance of the project

In the context of what we now know about the National Plan of Public Works, the Naval College has also a particular relevance. Its duality as both academic campus and military base presents an opportunity to analyse how its construction and design process took place, to consider the project itself as architectural and urban object, and its historical interpretation. The idea, then, is to think about the scale of the city and the College as part of a wider strategy in the context of the Cold War.

For reasons that will be detailed in this Chapter, in my opinion, the Naval College was one of the most relevant and ambitious projects undertaken by the regime. It is a modern architectural complex located in Cartagena de Indias, the paramount colonial city of Colombia. It was developed in a terrain of 163 hectares (1,63km²) and its initial project had more than 100,000m² designed, which establishes the magnitude of the enterprise. The project was designed by the architectural practice Obregón & Valenzuela – identified here as O&V – a rather young and inexperienced firm at that time. Let us then explore the city as a first approach in moving towards its buildings.

▪ Cartagena in the Caribbean

The project was a priority for the military government. Admittedly the fact that the Minister of Public Works was a Navy official may have influenced the significance of this project, but I will consider other aspects. Whilst discussions about urban development at the national level were relevant, other historical aspects are significant for this research: namely, the location of Colombia in the Caribbean Sea. Although there is no data that directly addresses this issue, from information already discussed about the concerns of the Western Hemisphere over the security of the Caribbean,

along with the extended military cooperation Colombia was receiving, one can assume its strategic location was considered.

The Caribbean coast represents a particular feature both to Colombia and to the continent. Historically, Cartagena de Indias has been a major port in the area since the sixteenth century.(Lemaitre et al. 1983) In addition, geographically, and due to the maritime currents, Cartagena has advantages over other cities on the coast in terms of navigability and proximity. As can be seen from the map its location is an accessible



Figure 75. Location of ENAP in Caribbean Sea © World Geographic (modified)

The city has a prominent and extended colonial architecture in particular the complex formed by fortresses and 12km of defence walls, that continue underwater in the entrances to the internal bay. A masterpiece of Spanish fortification, not only the largest but also the most secure in the area, it successfully repelled the attacks to which the city was subject as the collection point for treasures sent to the crown. This colonial defence system has become the identifying feature of Cartagena, which is commonly understood as the old walled city; it has been protected as National Heritage since 1959, and was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1984.

Figure 76. Cartagena's representative images: Colonial fortress and historic centre
2008 © Juan Marulanda/ MPSB

The Naval College is a key referent of the city for its inhabitants. Officials wearing pristine uniforms are part of the city's daily life, and their associated locations are distributed over the urban area. However, none of these installations defines a landmark. They became practically invisible in the daily life and to the not informed ones. These sites have been integrated into the urban pattern, leaving predominance to colonial structures.

▪ Urbanizing extension areas

The urban context denotes some particularities for this project. The Naval College Almirante Padilla was built on an island that closes the internal bay of Cartagena from the south and where there remained traces of an ancient colonial fortress from the eighteenth century called San Juan de Manzanillo.¹⁸⁶ The surrounding area was an incipient urban extension towards what was then the new petrochemical industrial area in the southeast; the Naval College is also near to the commercial harbour of the city that was increasing its activity, and its surroundings were rapidly becoming dilapidated sectors. In the internal bay, there is also direct access to the coast through this island.

After the excitement generated by Charles A. Lindberg's landing in Cartagena in 1930, the "Colombo-German Society of Air Transport - SCADTA" inaugurated an alternative airport on Manzanillo's island which, despite its strategic location, had remained empty; this airport basically assured the occupation of the land.

In addition to the overcrowding in the Base ARC Bolívar, (Roman Bazurto 2005; Samudio Trallero 1999) as we have seen the 1940s and 1950s were active decades of urbanization in Colombia, and as a consequence there was a desire to develop planning regulations. Since the Master Urban Plan of Cartagena of 1948, the location of this Naval Base was considered inappropriate due to its proximity to the colonial centre and residential areas. However, it characterized the city as "a principal harbour, rail network terminal, commercial and tourism centre, *city of the Navy base*, and Olympics [games] city". [My emphasis] (Gonzales Concha 1948)

After several years of lethargic development, Cartagena began receiving private investment from petrochemical companies,¹⁸⁷ which allowed the development of a new industrial area called Mamonal, and the activation of its commercial harbour. The process of internal migration that was common all around the country at that time found then an attraction pole in this south-eastern area of the city. The road that

¹⁸⁶ The remaining parts of this fortress were restored and integrated into the "Casa de Huespedes Ilustres", i.e. the official residence given to guests of state by invitation of the president of Colombia. Designed in 1978-1982 by the architect Rogelio Salmona with the cooperation of the architectural historian Germán Téllez.

¹⁸⁷ See detailed information in (Sáenz Rovner 2002)

connected both sectors provided an opportunity for the growth and consolidation of linear informal settlements, thereby creating a deteriorated urban area. (Giaino 1999)

As the urban development plan of Cartagena of 1948 shows, there were discussions relating to the need for relocating the Naval College. In this case, the local and national government considered two options: the first was to move the institution to Tierra Bomba Island, the second to move it to Manzanillo Island.

Figure 77. Aerial picture before urban development, 1954 © IGAC

Considerations concerning both options were discussed to the point where there seemed to be no agreement. The main argument in favour of the first alternative of relocating to Tierra Bomba Island was its tactical location closing up the external bay of Cartagena; it also had a bigger terrain that would allow for the full relocation of the institution. (Gonzales Concha 1948) However, the principal concern about this location was its lack of connection with the city, and the inconvenience of the total isolation of its community, as it would take more than 40 minutes by boat to reach the mainland; in

Data restriction



Endless discussions in the local administration led to suggestions to relocate the Navy to Barranquilla,¹⁸⁸ which generated a negative reaction from the community supporting the permanence of the institution as an emblem of Cartagena. (Lemaitre et al. 1983)

Figure 78. Mass support for the ENAP to remain in Cartagena ©FHC

These preceding discussions are fundamental to understanding the location of the new Naval College on Manzanillo Island. Yet there is no clear information about the

¹⁸⁸ The Navy opened simultaneously other training centre for low rank marines in Barranquilla.

institutional, or governmental, considerations by Rojas regime for the final decision on c.1955 of the Naval College being built on Manzanillo Island – an abandoned coralline formation, visible from most urban areas of the city.

▪ **Geographic location**

As a consequence of the decision in favour of Manzanillo Island, the Navy redefined its strategy to assure its presence at different points of the bay – as shown in the aerial view. The location of remaining parts of colonial fortresses seems to be retaken; presumably the Navy drew on a strategy that had proved to be successful in protecting the city in earlier centuries.¹⁸⁹

Figure 79. Location of sixteenth century fortresses in Cartagena's bay © IGAC (modified)

In line with such a strategy, the military base ARC Bolivar remains in the same location in the external area of the wall of the colonial city. Tierra Bomba Island holds a post of control. The terrain in Castillo Grande was designated for the Naval social club. And the Naval College was relocated to Manzanillo Island, the first of these three projects to be developed.

Figure 80. Navy sites in Cartagena in 1974: keeping the same locations of the colonial fortresses © IGAC (modified)



¹⁸⁹ Further information about Cartagena's colonial fortress, walls and the complex of monuments can be found in (Lemaitre et al. 1983), (Lemaitre 1993)

Data restriction

5.3. The original drawings and plans from the 1950s.

Data restriction

Figure 81. O&V label of Naval College blueprints showing different years, and people involved © AB

The range of blueprints covers the urban plan, and architectural plans, façades, sections, technical details, sketches, and perspectives. The plans drawn in pencil follow all the standards of the time. The quality of the drawings is remarkable, as it emphasizes different intensities and gradations. Perspectives are drawn in pencil, and additionally with ink, and markers. The representation of this project is similar to any other of the firm at that time.

¹⁹⁰ Rafael Obregón Herrera – the son of Rafael Obregón and General Manager of the building company that continued the legacy of the O&V – donated some of the material of the projects designed by them.

The architect Edgar Bueno (2009), whose sketches are among the most successful from that time, mentions how the perspectives and drawings of this project follow the usual patterns of O&V. Thus there were no special requirements in terms of communication regarding the project. The graphic representation of the complex was produced under similar conditions to that of any other private project of this practice. This is of particular significance as these images of an academic campus and military site have been in the public domain since its construction.

A particular element of interest is the image of the model of the complex. The model was essential to communicate a new spatiality to people who were familiar with other forms of habitat. Perspectives provide additional readability for new projects, and therefore they were preferred over plans or other technical documentation. As the regime made an effort to present its achievements to the community, it was common to present architectural projects through models and perspectives. In the case of the ENAP, this model became a sort of official image of the project. It appears in at least three different publications, all of them with very different audiences. In addition to *Proa* journal, the project was presented by the model in: the *Corredera*, the internal journal of the Naval College; *Cromos*, a weekly national magazine addressed to the upper middle classes; and in the local newspaper of Cartagena, *El Universal*.

Figure 82. Different covers using the same image © ENAP / Corredera Magazine / Proa

The model itself was a central element in the exhibition of the National Plan of Public Works in 1954. Due to its size, it is highly unlikely that it travelled with the exhibition. On the contrary, Captain Ramírez García (2009), a retired official, reports: “the model remained since the beginning, and for several years, in the Naval College, usually at the entrance of the administrative building”. Over time, the model served to show to the internal community transformations and additions to the original plan. Unfortunately, it was removed from the administrative hall in c.2004, and cannot now be located.

Figure 83. Picture of the original model featuring the proposal of later additions (the initial project in white) c. 1970 © ENAP

In addition, the Naval College has recently found a design brochure for the project, (O&V [1955]) and a set of construction blueprints dating from 1956. The former have explanatory drawings of the architectural complex. The latter are heliographic copies, some of them with site notes that seem to have different dates, and they show some of the adaptations that were necessary during the construction of the first phase.

Figure 84. Image O&V Brochure for ENAP project: perspectives without reference to the military character of the complex ©ENAP

It is possible to see from them how some decisions were taken on site, maintaining the general plan. It is very probable that these changes were made by the Navy, and not by O&V. These have also been the basic plans for transformations made directly by the Navy in the following decades on some buildings. None of the interviewees has referenced any consultation with the original designers about these changes. (Tapia 2010);(Lemaitre 2009);(Ceballos 2009a) It can therefore be assumed that, after the initial design, the architectural practice O&V had little if any input into the evolution of the architectural complex.

Figure 85. Construction blueprints of the cadets' dining room © ENAP

Remarkably, in the unit logbook for October 30th, 1964 there is an annotation about the denomination of the buildings within the project. ([ENAP] 1964) Instead of the function assigned to each building, they were identified by the name of a representative official relevant to the history of the Colombian Navy, and became official after that date. This means that buildings are no longer identified by their functions; these names have been incorporated and are still in use today.

Figure 86. Annotation in the ENAP logbook about denomination of buildings © ENAP

Comparing the original sets of drawings with the latest ones reveal changes that may have initially been related to adjustments to accomplish diverse activities that were considered after the first proposal. Perhaps the most visible of these is the area allocated to create a residential zone, namely Manzanillo neighbourhood, in the

general plan. Other changes are related to the definition of phases of execution. Although these changes were relevant to the conditions of the complex, they did not alter the architectural part of the project.

On the following sets of plans it is visible how the main area of education and accommodation for “one thousand five hundred cadets”, officials, and inferior warrant officers was prioritized. Indeed, in 1955 the Navy defined the construction of the project in two reported phases.¹⁹¹ *Proa* mentions the allocated budget “for the first phase is four million pesos”. (Martínez 1955) That is, the initial allocation of resources did not correspond with the budget: it was insufficient. In this respect, Rafael Bueno (2009), one of the architects who participated as a junior, remarks, “the project exceeded the expectations, and the budget, of the Navy”; it was therefore necessary to reduce the construction area, by introducing new functions into buildings that originally had only a single function. As a matter of fact, the construction was initiated with the area identified as the heart of the complex with the buildings originally defined as: technical classrooms, dining room, “cameras”,¹⁹² and cadets’ accommodation. (Ceballos 2009b)

Figure 87. Spread sheet of the programme, areas, phases, and values © AB

According to *Proa*, the total cost of the complex was estimated as “twenty million pesos”¹⁹³ and it was foreseen that the construction would be finished in five years. Martínez enthusiastically comments: “if in fifteen years or so, due to the growth of the country, there is higher demand for war or merchant officials, then the extensions anticipated in these blueprints will be developed”. (Martínez 1955)

The construction of these buildings at the core of the complex ensures the general plan is preserved. The decision about phases is strategic in a project of such magnitude. None of the interviewees participated in the decisions made, but they were part of the following steps. However, it is possible to identify that the priority was to

¹⁹¹ Reported in *La Corredora*, (“[Editorial] Nuestra portada” 1955) but in the discrimination of cost, O&V identifies three or even four phases. (Obregon & Valenzuela - O&V 1954-1961)

¹⁹² “Camera” denotes the social space for officials or cadets. i.e. entertainment, and socializing.

¹⁹³ O&V documented the amount in building budget \$17.124.875 with an additional cost of the project cost \$481.307

maintain the overall layout of the project. In that sense, the selection of the central area, identified as the academic zone, is understandable.

Figure 88. Aerial view of first ENAP buildings proves the difficulty of identifying the conformation of buildings © ENAP

After the start of the construction there were technical difficulties that had not been contemplated in this project's fast track.¹⁹⁴ Rafael Bueno, a junior architect of the firm, reports "the project was severely delayed". (Bueno 2009) This signifies that the plan was affected in terms of budget and time. It also explains some alterations to the designs. Although, the construction of the first phase had initially been foreseen as taking one year, took more than two years. At the time the dictatorship fell, this initial phase was suspended. This meant that the already limited resources were frozen, as happened with all the works in progress at the time.

A Captain at the time, Admiral Orlando Lemaitre (2009), who was assigned as Director of the Naval College in 1959, observes in one of the interviews held, "at that time, Manzanillo construction work was abandoned, buildings were just on the cladding process". The Navy under the command of Admiral Jaime Eraso Annexi¹⁹⁵ (1916-2010) agreed to resume work on the new college, but resources were limited.

Therefore, with the aim of continuing the construction, and making use of the available installations, in 1959 Lemaitre contacted Rafael Obregón to adjust the proposal to the current requirements.¹⁹⁶ As a consequence, interior transformations were carried out on those buildings that had been constructed, in order to allocate to them the necessary functions for moving the Naval College to this site. This changed the configuration of functions and the clarity of the programme but, as most of the interiors had been conceived as free plans, it was relatively simple to adapt the interiors for new uses. In order to assure a rapid finalization, Lemaitre hired architect

¹⁹⁴ These technical aspects of the construction will be explained later on.

¹⁹⁵ Also spelled Eraso-Annexy once moved permanently to the United States

¹⁹⁶ It would be worth to note that 1958 is the year registered in an additional set of blueprints, with some changes, mainly, in the use of the same spaces.

William Ceballos, a former cadet, as field architect,¹⁹⁷ who stresses, “changes were just in the interior”. In our interviews, he has insisted the idea of the navy was to be as faithful as possible to the original project, but some changes were necessary to make the project functional according to changes and new demands of the institution. (Ceballos 2009b, 2009a) Despite this persistence on the affirmation that buildings were not modified, I have found minor discrepancies between blueprints and pictures of that time. Manzanillo Island was occupied from March 27th, 1961, when the director of the college Admiral Lemaitre ordered the move.

• New language

The Naval College layout seems relatively familiar to any person who has had some contact with modern architectural complexes. The College was organized following elements in common with other similar projects built elsewhere during the same period.¹⁹⁸ The campus creates an orthogonal composition that follows a systemic organisation of regular elements. It is a neat geometrical composition based on modulation and assemblage of components of the programme.

Figure 89. Naval College work sketches looking for solutions of the programme,
 O&V © AB

The self-contained complex of the Naval College was intended to fulfil its own needs, reducing the dependency on other sectors of the city. The logbook of the military unit quotes “the project will be allocated 1,500 cadets”. ([ENAP] 1946-1976) Although the note stresses an estimated number of cadets, it is worth mentioning that references to the institutional hierarchy of naval officer ranks are omitted in the description of the project. Yet, implicitly, it was highly influential to the design, and in the definition of the development of the construction.

¹⁹⁷ After his years as a cadet at the ENAP. Ceballos was trained as an architect at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. This architect worked as facilities manager of the Naval College for more than 20 years.

¹⁹⁸ At the time the Naval Colleges of other Latin American countries were built, as well as other military schools, such as Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. However a comparative study is yet to be done.

Figure 90. Naval College, first version of the urban plan: note the change on the morphology of the terrain, and a completely different layout, O&V, 1955-1961 © AB

For the purposes of this construction a modification of the terrain was implemented. Though, one of the initial drafts of the project explored that, on the aerial pictures it is possible to see that its morphology or extension did not change. (IGAC 1942, 1954, 1968, 1977) Nevertheless, architects involved with the project, Tapia and Ceballos, both agree, mentioning in their interviews: “it [the terrain] was elevated 1.10 metres”. (Tapia 2010; Ceballos 2009b) In their view, this elevation was one of the technical achievements of the complex. Due to the integration of traditional and contemporary techniques, this elevation was prepared with the use of pilotis embedded in the terrain made of a local wood called mangrove,¹⁹⁹ and conformed by fitting together and tamping down seashells. This elevation over the high-tide sea level creates a flat terrain, and protects the island from inundations.

However successful, the elevation of the terrain generated some problems in the structure of the new constructions. Ceballos (2009b) claims “the terrain was not stable enough to resist the weight of the new structures”. This therefore caused delays in the construction, and it was necessary to provide reinforcements to the structure, which are still visible.

Figure 91. Naval College, approved general plan O&V, 1955-1961 © AB

At first sight it is readable from the general plan that the Naval College is a complex programme. Buildings are distributed in different sectors engaging the totality of the island. Some expansions were contemplated from the beginning as part of the repetitive elements, or as objects playing within the lines of the composition. There is no space left for later developments beyond the ones already included in the programme. From the project it is possible to conclude that the island has just enough space to contain the Navy’s anticipated needs.

¹⁹⁹ A hydro plant that grows on the Caribbean coastal areas.

On the urban level, the Naval College works as a satellite area of the main city. Within the island it responds to the architectural programme required for the military institution at that moment, in a built area of 104,938m². From the blueprints of the original project it is possible to read that there is a rigorous composition based on straight lines and right angles, on what one of the architects who participated in the design, Hernando Tapia, calls a “green base”, i.e. a predominance of the void terrain. (Tapia 2010) Since the original layout in the set of blueprints of 1955, (Obregon & Valenzuela - O&V 1954-1961) the order of the complex is defined from two axes.²⁰⁰

The complex gives particular prominence to the parade camp, conceived as a central square, a rigid surface of massive proportions without elements of shadow or landmarks. There is a clear zoning of the compound by five different areas of assembled buildings. This zoning is reported in *Proa* as four areas with similar proportions: administration; instruction and dormitories; sports; services and support personnel. Each area, in turn, follows the institutional hierarchy, divided into spaces for officials, cadets, and recruits.

However, there is a change in the proportion and disposition of areas, mainly due to the introduction in the north sector of housing for officials. Along with these minor changes, I found constant the increasing priority given to areas for instruction and officials. Areas related to military requirements are not apparent.

Within the general organization of the Naval College layout, and the division into zones, there are groups of buildings that respond to the complex programme, each group composed by pure volumes. Here I will introduce the original plan of 1955: the administration zone (19,143m²) is integrated in the north, it is an area of administrative offices and dormitories in two pavilions raised off the ground on *pilotis*, linked through social areas called “cameras” for flag rank and commissioned officials, the prominent image of this volume being the sequence of concrete vaults. It also includes an additional subgroup with such services as theatre, library, and chapel, which are pure geometric solids integrated through organic-shaped gardens. Finally there is the clinic

²⁰⁰ One of which was the former runway of the pre-existing airport, but it has not been possible to establish which.

as an independent building compound formed by two introverted²⁰¹ volumes linked by a passageway.

Figure 92. Buildings interconnected: transition on interior and exterior spaces
©MPSB

In the central area (52,401m²), there is another group of buildings that follows a similar organization to that of the first subgroup mentioned, and also reinforces the horizontality of all the objects. This is the zone for dormitories for cadets and recruits, and comprises two prism pavilions, one for cadets, and the other for recruits, of four levels elevated on *pilotis* with a free ground floor. Despite these being the largest volumes, the proportion and disposition of the freestanding objects generate an impression of transparency and lightness. These two buildings are connected through one volume of cameras for cadets that once more is the only element on the ground, with a sequence of vaults.

Figure 93. Volume of the dormitories in the 1960s, and 2010: preserving main features but the free ground floor © Corredera magazine / MPSB

This area also has two additional subgroups: a series of four pavilions for classrooms and laboratories, with workshops and an armoury at the back, which volumes again appear elevated as the closed areas on the ground floor are only the services for the upper levels. In addition, the prominent element on the façade is an elevated passageway that serves as an atrium providing shade for the parades. This liminal space is a prominent feature of this set of buildings.

Figure 94. Officials' assembly in front of the class rooms © ENAP

And finally there is a set of what appears as a double volume for dining rooms for cadets and recruits, and its service areas. These again are two introverted buildings with perhaps the most rhythmic facades of the complex.

²⁰¹ Their exteriors are close walls, but their spaces are open and connected to an interior garden.

Figure 95. Dining room elevations © Proa 91

The area of physical training (5.150m²) occupies the south of Manzanillo. This area provides: a gym, pool, shooting range, and volleyball, basketball, football, and baseball fields. Interestingly it also includes a Naval museum; as an element of transition with the centre, this building exemplifies the dissolution of boundaries generated by a glass wall that integrates the interior and exterior space.

Figure 96. Gym perspective © Proa 91

On the east, in addition to three buildings for access control, there is the sector associated with support personnel, i.e. warrant and petty officers (28,244m²). This area is self-contained as it has dormitories, camera, gym, theatre, laundry for the use of lower ranks, or service members of the institution. However, this sector had the most reduced spaces, and is least developed in the design.

Despite the oral testimony presented here, I have found no information about the residential area proposed on the north. Admiral Lemaitre argues that “[he] thought the College was far away from the [residential areas of the] city, [therefore] it was better to provide some basic houses for officials and their families”. (Lemaitre 2010) William Ceballos, as field architect of the Naval College, claims that he designed the house type that was later used in the creation of Manzanillo neighbourhood. He also mentions how this design was approved by Obregón, and impacted on Ceballos’s later projects. (Ceballos 2009a)

There are common elements in the organization of the volumes according to a rigorous geometry. Areas of circulation and shade are essential in every part of the complex. Most buildings, being prism volumes elevated on pilotis, have a free ground floor generating continuities in circulation, and shade. This was one of the first areas where changes were pursued, as it was unusual to have this excess of free areas in buildings without an evident use.

Within these buildings, the formal language identifies internal functions through different roof solutions, use of diverse wall types, transition spaces, and structural

elements. In each case, composition lines, and equilibrium of the masses, are evident in the volume. In other words, from the general plan to *brise-soleils* there is a rigorous geometric disposition that gives formal unity to the complex.

The project had additional difficulties during the construction. As a consequence the Navy ended up defining different phases from the ones originally proposed by O&V. Those changes required numerous modifications in the function assigned to the interiors. Most of these changes were seen as temporary, therefore a minimal intervention was expected. Negotiation and a continuous exchange between officials and designers that were necessary to set the premises of the project not longer occurred. As a consequence, the layout of the general plan was a priority in the construction, and during the dictatorship the works for the five (out of seven) main groups of buildings were initiated.

Figure 97. Aerial view of the first group of buildings. © Corredera 38

As mentioned previously, the construction of the first phase had several delays due to technical issues. With the dictatorship's fall, construction was suspended for about two years. The next government resumed work in order to complete the buildings that had been initiated.

Figure 98. ENAP in 1959, during the period construction works were suspended © SAMPER/BEER

There is no massive building. Indeed, even though Manzanillo Island is visible from almost the whole of the urban areas of Cartagena, the landscape has no prominent features. The general perception of the built environment of the island is the predominance of emptiness and openness. There are clear and smooth transitions in the components of volumes, generating harmony among the elements of the complex, bringing scale and protection.

Another notable aspect is the management of roofs, which complement the identity of each function in the complex, facilitating the social reference. These utilize the possibilities of concrete as flat terraces, structural tiled beams, or curved

membranes. In each case, they are evident in the volume as lines in the composition, bringing equilibrium with the masses of different textures.

▪ **Technical innovation and tradition**

The technical considerations of the project fulfil two main aspects: the adaptation to the climatic conditions in which it is located, and the incorporation of new materials and techniques. On the one hand, the Caribbean island, with its humidity, high temperatures all year around and constant winds, defines another particularity of the project. Therefore the disposition of volumes accords with the solar exposure, reducing surfaces with direct exposure to the sun's rays, the openings and voids of façades dissolve their boundaries allowing cross-flows in the interiors, and reducing temperatures inside. On the other hand, all the constructions presented an opportunity to experiment with technologies: they were planned in reinforced concrete, using both the most advanced techniques of the time and contemporary adaptations of traditional ones. The structure of the porticos permits not only the adaptation to a coralline soil, but the conception of free areas modified by simple plans, setting suitable conditions for the suspension on pilotis of the main buildings, and a continuous passageway with light structural elements, which may be one of the most characteristic aspects of the Naval College.

Figure 99. Geometric composition: detail of celosias bricks to enclose spaces allowing illumination and ventilation © ENAP

According to the interview I had with Captain Ramírez García (2009) who was among the first contingent to move to Manzanillo, petty officials at the time were “helping to make the space adequate, providing furniture already in use from other buildings and vessels”. But perhaps the strongest memory of this official was how the “whole island was resplendent” – that is to say that, during the first years, it was difficult to see outside due to the refraction of the white seashell soil and the environmental conditions of Cartagena. This clear soil reinforced the bright light of the Caribbean. And at the same time it reflected the heat; as there was no vegetation, “we planted palms and trees to create some shade”.

5.4. Fast track project

The interest surrounding the Naval College project and how it was appraised can be inferred from its selection as the front feature in an exhibition that aimed to show how the regime was responding to the social needs of the country. One can hardly believe that the community considered the Naval College a priority. As we have seen, facilities to improve living conditions and increase production were deemed as urgent. Nevertheless, the project illustrates how the dictatorship conceived the construction of the new state.

Figure 100. Logbook of the ENAP, rare notes about construction ©ENAP

The unit's logbook records on September 10th, ([ENAP] 1955b) that by the decree 2435 the presidency:

[O]rders the construction of the new Naval College and, to do so, assigns the terrains in Manzanillo Island in the bay of Cartagena. Captain Jaime Eraso Annexi, vice-president of the board of the Dique canal, and the engineer Alfonso Mejia, from Obregón & Valenzuela, the practice hired for the works, visited the terrains [...], and immediately began the filling works in the zone where the new Colombian Academy of Naval War will be built. It will cost twenty million pesos, and will have an initial capacity for 1,500 cadets.

The following relevant annotation is on October 8th, ([ENAP] 1955a) when the minister of Public Works, Ruben Piedrahita, with other ministers, and high-ranking officials visited the construction works in progress.

Admiral Jaime Eraso Annexi reported in one of his latest interviews, recorded in *Pañol de historia* – a naval journal – that the construction of the Naval College was part of a plan he had proposed as commander “to modernize the Colombian Navy”. (Eraso

Annexi et al. [2011]) This essentially comprised facilities and vessels. According to Eraso's testimony, after a long process to determine the ownership of the terrain in Manzanillo Island, the government gave the property to the Navy in 1956 [sic].²⁰² This was one or two years after the project was actually designed at the end of 1954. (Eraso Annexi et al. [2011]) Eraso, who at the time was the commander of the Navy, stated in the interview that, after the architectural practice had received the commission abroad:

The studio, blueprints and all the details [of the architectural project] were developed in the space of two months, with an excellent outcome that accelerated the legal, administrative, and financial aspects needed to begin the construction.

This testimony, which concurs with Tapia's interview, confirms that the Naval College project was one of the "fast track" projects. It is abnormal for an architectural project of such complexity and scale to have been advanced in such a short time, particularly considering the manual labour: design, drawing and modelling, in the context of a small practice with no experience in similar projects. Therefore questions must persist about possible cooperation with other firms, the information received, or even whether the design of O&V began from scratch.

²⁰² Note the mistaken year, as it differs from the information recorded in the unit logbook.

6. Tracing connections

As with other projects of the dictatorship, it is necessary to trace connections with the available information, in order to achieve a better sense of what at first sight might seem arbitrary. For this purpose, most of the information presented here has been obtained through contacting and interviewing architects who in different ways – externally or internally – were related to the firm that developed the project, Obregón & Valenzuela.

Given that we are referring to oral history spanning more than 50 years, most of the interviews were conducted over two sessions, and in some cases there has been follow-up via email. In order to learn about the context and specific information, I tried to follow a similar script in the interviews, but most of them took the form of an open dialogue as this seemed to be more productive in allowing memories to flow more freely. Most of them were either voice-recorded, or notes were taken at the time.

6.1. How was it commissioned?

The Naval College project was commissioned by the national government. Information about how O&V was appointed is contradictory. There are no documents in the Ministry of Public Works archive about how the process was managed. During the first interview we had, the architect Tapia (2009) recalled: “It was an international contest. Architectural practices from Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil and others presented proposals. And Obregón won it.” However, when trying to go into the specifics on how the project was presented, Tapia could only comment: “Rafael [Obregón] had good relations, at the highest level, and he was the one in direct contact with the Army [sic].”

Conversely, Germán Samper Gnecco (2011) argues, “The problem was that none of these projects were clear. I think they [Obregón & Valenzuela] received a direct commission, that was the way with the Military.” This concurs with Admiral Orlando Lemaitre’s reasoning: “It was a dictatorship, there was no need to ask anyone. It would have been directly commissioned.” (Lemaitre 2010) It is possible that the Navy

organized an invited private competition, involving small practices. Considering the lack of supporting evidence about any international contest remaining in the archives of the Society of Colombian Architects, it is more likely that it was indeed a direct commission to Obregón & Valenzuela, who were themselves keen sailors and had previous personal relations with key members of the Ministry of Public Works, and later on, designed several houses for Navy officials.

Information about possible guidelines to develop the project is also relevant to this research. In this respect, Tapia (2010) recalls, “we had absolute freedom to develop the project as we wanted”. However, on entering into some of the general aspects of the project, he did not have a great deal of information. Admittedly, after more than 50 years some memory lapses are to be expected. Yet despite the project being immediately identified, no information was recalled about the design *parti*²⁰³ or the general layout. Thus questions about the wider involvement of other professionals or firms arise despite the information found through blueprints and interviews, as we will see.

6.2. Who developed the project?

As was common during the regime, the Naval College was designed by a fairly small and new architectural practice, Obregón & Valenzuela.²⁰⁴ Their partners were young but prominent architects who were at the time building their reputation through innovative projects. Their language was eminently modern, and they were part of the first generation of Colombian architects to have studied abroad. On their return to the country, they created an architectural practice that despite several changes is still relatively active.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Commonly in use for other projects and architects of the time, this refers to the organizing idea of the project.

²⁰⁴ Indeed, there were no large corporations in Colombia at that time. This topic about foreigners is expanded in Chapter 3.

²⁰⁵ The website of the firm includes a time line: Obregón & Valenzuela Co. apparently came into being on its partners' return to Colombia in July 1944, but it was not officially registered with the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce until November 18th, 1952 (under the register 26111 and 4827 public deed at

Until the 1940s foreigners invited to the country, either as firms or individual practitioners, developed most relevant projects. The practice of architecture was held in few hands, and mainly concentrated in the main cities, namely: Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. After 1942 the first group of students of architecture from the Universidad Nacional started to feed the increasing demand for designing the built environment. These offices were small, and their arena of action very limited, usually being concentrated in their own city.

• Obregón & Valenzuela O&V

At the time of the commissioning of the Naval College, Obregón & Valenzuela was a partnership founded by Rafael Obregón Gonzalez, José María Obregón Rocha, and Pablo Valenzuela y Vega. Members of prominent immigrant Spanish families, all three had studied architecture during the Second World War at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC.

Both the political situation and the education they had received from the American university informed the projects designed by the practice, and in turn they engaged in the dissemination of modernist ideas through their participation in Colombian universities. I will return to this point later on.

Rafael Obregón Gonzalez (1919-1976), who qualified as an architect at the Catholic University of America in 1943, was a talented practitioner.²⁰⁶ When in 2011 I interviewed the senior architect Hernán Vieco,²⁰⁷ he recalled: "Obregón was one of the most skilful designers of that time".(Vieco 2011) He was the principal designer of the firm, and also the most outgoing of the partnership. One can find that on several

Seventh Notary). It is worth noting that this was one year before the regime took office. It was a fairly new practice. Later, due to partnership changes, it was registered as Obregón & Valenzuela Co. Ltd from 1969 to 1976. After the death of the main designer partner, the firm moved towards becoming the Construction Company Obregón & Valenzuela Ltd Inc from 1976 to 1982 (by creating a partnership of O&V with Ospinas Co). From 1982 to the present day, it has carried on its activity as Construction Company Obreval Inc.

²⁰⁶ Obregón received an honours degree.

²⁰⁷ Hernán Vieco (1925-2012) is one of the Colombian architects who worked with Le Corbusier after his first visit to the country. Among other projects he participated as junior architect on Marcel Breuer/Bernard Zehrfuss' team for the UNESCO headquarters.

occasions the firm was identified solely with him. Obregón undertook the public relations of the architectural practice. His connections as an active member of affluent circles, and his involvement in various hobbies, made him someone able to access different levels of society and to win clients.

José María Obregón Rocha ([1921-1982]), also awarded a degree as an architect of the Catholic University of America in 1944, was a member of technical commissions of institutions related with construction, such as *Camacol*, the *Banco de Crédito*, and of the Pan-American Congress of Architects in 1968. José María was a cousin of Rafael Obregón and, perhaps on account of having the same surname, he was known as “Pepe”.²⁰⁸ He was in charge of the design of housing projects and closely involved with their construction.

During his architectural studies at the Catholic University of America (1940s), Pablo Valenzuela y Vega ([1920-1954]) met the Obregón cousins and, upon his return to Colombia, they decided to run the practice together. Valenzuela acted as the manager of the company; he was not usually involved in design and, judging from his record at university, he was the least outstanding designer of the three founders.

After returning to Colombia, Rafael Obregón and Pablo Valenzuela were immediately connected with local universities. (Tapia 2010) Obregón taught at two of the most prominent of them: the state-owned Universidad Nacional de Colombia for more than 25 years, and at the privately founded Universidad de Los Andes. Similarly, Valenzuela was at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and the Universidad de los Andes.²⁰⁹ Through teaching they disseminated their ideas in academia, and also had the opportunity of encountering talented students, some of whom would subsequently work with the firm.

Later, other architects and engineers joined the partnership. Some of them started as draughtsmen, or juniors. The professionals linked with the firm include:

²⁰⁸ In order to differentiate both Obregón cousins, I follow the practice of the office, using Obregón when referring to Rafael, and Pepe, to José María.

²⁰⁹ Although, according to the information gathered by Germán Téllez in a recent study still unpublished about the history of the School of Architecture and Fine Art of Universidad de Los Andes, Valenzuela is not listed as a staff member at any time. Téllez comments: “he might have been one of the many informal guest tutors”. (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

Architect Hernando Tapia Azuero;²¹⁰ Engineer Alberto Sanz de Santamaria;²¹¹ Architect Edgar Bueno Tafur;²¹² Architect Manuel Forero Delgadillo;²¹³ Engineer Vicente Hernandez Rosano;²¹⁴ and Architect Rafael Obregón Herrera.²¹⁵

Some of these students started as draughtsmen and then gained other positions. Such was the case with Hernando Tapia, who joined the firm in his third year of studies, and soon became a lead designer and associate architect of the firm. However, he was never a partner, whereas there are other cases of draughtsmen who evolved within the firm, as is the case of Edgar Bueno.

According to Tapia, “Valenzuela was the manager, Pepe was in charge of small projects, Rafael [Obregón] was the *sociálite* and a good designer”. He continues: “Rafael and I developed basic schemes and preliminary plans, from which, later on, juniors developed clean blueprints.” (Tapia 2009)

At the centre of the practice, Rafael Obregón and Hernando Tapia were in charge of the project for the Naval College. There were other professionals as junior architects who appear in the blueprints as drawing assistants: M. Forero, E. Bueno, C. Ricaurte, M. García, Maldonado. (Obregón & Valenzuela - O&V 1954-1961)

• Architects: small firm, young architects

²¹⁰ Hernando Tapia Azuelo (1937-2011), Architect Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Member of the Colombian Society of Architects. Founder and ex-rector of Piloto University. Member of the Bolivarian Society of Architects (Venezuela). Delegate to the V and VII international congress of UIA. Lecturer at Universidad Nacional de Colombia, and an active member of the Colombian Communist Party.

²¹¹ Alberto Saenz de Santamaria, Civil engineer Bachelor by Cornell University at 1957. Resident engineer at Pardo Restrepo & Santamaria and Mopal 1957. Partner of Summa Construction 1958-1959. Partner in charge of construction at Silva & Santamaria 1959-1960. Partner in charge of construction at Obregón & Valenzuela Co 1960-1969. Partner and manager of Obregón & Valenzuela Ltd Co 1969-1976.

²¹² Edgar Bueno Tafur, Architect by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Lecturer at Javeriana and National universities. Lecturer and Dean at Piloto University. Fellow lecturer Universidad Central de Quito. Member of the Institute of Architects of Venezuela. Member of the teaching commission and board at Colombian Society of Architects. Secretary of the Vision habitat centre. Consultant at Colombian institute for the promotion of higher education – ICFES.

²¹³ Manuel Forero Delgadillo. Architect Universidad Nacional de Colombia. IT technician.

²¹⁴ Vicente Hernandez, Civil Engineer by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, with specialization in building management at Universidad Javeriana.

²¹⁵ Rafael Obregón Herrera (Jr), Architect at Rhode Island School of Design. Master in Urban Studies for developing countries at MIT. Obregón Herrera has had a career as an urban planner participating in main agencies at the national level and in Bogotá.

Exploring the connotations of the studies in the Catholic University of America undertaken by the three original partners of O&V, it is necessary to point out their studies occurred during wartime. Consequently the conditions were exceptional, not only because of the small number of Colombians studying abroad at the time, but also because of the conditions of the university in which they were enrolled.

During the war, US universities had a shortage of personnel. Numbers of both professors and students were sharply reduced. In the records of the CUA I found minutes of the faculty board containing constant allusions to the continuous reduction in members of the academic community. Remarkably, however, they also note the increase in foreign students, particularly from Latin America and Europe. (Catholic University of America et al. 1942) Reviewing the list of students and staff at the time shows that most of them were foreigners. Indeed in 1944 Obregon graduated with five other students, only two of whom were American.²¹⁶

Figure 101. CUA's newspaper note about Obregon's involvement in contemporary discussions ©CUA

I found other relevant information about the university and the curriculum of architecture. In the history of the CUA it is noticeable that the campus served as a military training campus for recruits for at least two years, until 1945. (Catholic University of America 1942) The curriculum of architecture, as noted by Jean Louis Cohen in his publication, included a course on civil camouflage, following the manuals prepared by Pratt University. According to the evaluation panel of the AIA accreditation process, design practices of civil camouflage were common in US academic programmes. ([Catholic University of America] 1940-1945) Therefore, it is clear that the three partners should be familiar with industrial camouflage as part of their architectural education. However, I have not found an explicit acknowledgement of that in the collected evidence.

²¹⁶ The CUA does not allow names on the list to be copied, as a policy to protect the privacy of their most renowned alumni.

• Links of the partners

Members of the O&V belonged to and moved within wealthy circles of Colombian society. This allowed them to access a number of private and public projects by invitation. Obregón was very skilful at this. In one of the interviews with Tapia (2010), the latter recalls how “Obregón got most of the projects to the office thanks to his own social contacts.”

Members of the practice also participated in and had continuous exchanges with other practices in Latin America. Indeed, according with the firm brochure, Obregón was president of the Colombian Society of Architects, and an honorary member of the Societies of Architects of Chile and of Venezuela. Pepe was a member of the Colombian Society of Architects, and a fellow of the Bolivarian Society of Architects.

From the archives of the Universidad Nacional, it is clear that Obregón assumed a prominent role within the studio, along with other professors such as Fernando Martínez Sanabria, Guillermo Bermudez and Gabriel Solano. All of these have been recognized as conspicuous architects of modernity.²¹⁷

• O&V experience

In the appendix there is a complete list of 137 projects designed by O&V. I have assembled this inventory from information gathered from various sources. The basic list has come from the firm's portfolio. (Obregon & Valenzuela - O&V [s.d.]) Architectural journals such as *Proa*, *Casas y Lotes*, *Arquitecturas* and *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* provided additional data, complementing the on-going research at Universidad Nacional de Colombia initiated by Isabel Llanos Chaparro and Edison Henao Carvajal, which in turn has developed final works in the architectural program.²¹⁸ Llanos' doctoral research is related to the evolution of type of their houses,

²¹⁷ Recent studies of Colombian modernity have made an important advance in recovering and analyzing their work, mainly in Bogotá. Cf. collection *Punto aparte*, a series of dissertations of the master in architecture of the Universidad Nacional.

²¹⁸ In the fifth year of studies in the Universidad Nacional, one of the specialization areas is a research-based studio about modern housing spaces. Some of their final works are by writing and others

and Henao's to the use of tower-platform typology.²¹⁹ In the table, first is the year or years of the project; the name used to identify the project, which in the vast majority refers to the owner; the built area, if known; and the location of the project as city, or neighbourhood if relevant.

Figure 102. O&V suburbia houses in Bogota: primary experience of the architectural practice ©O&V/EM/E

The largest percentage of their projects were private houses (81%). A considerable number of these were individual buildings in outskirts with average area of construction of around 400m², occupying usually less than half of the property. A small number of housing projects were designed mainly "for rent", i.e. houses built by their clients to achieve some profit. The number of social clubs and commercial offices reaches 12%, and these are concentrated in the 1960s.

There was a sharp rise in the activity of the firm during the years 1955-1958, coinciding with the time of accelerated urbanization that took place during the whole decade, including the years of the dictatorship. At the time urban areas were expanding and suburban houses – their speciality – were in high demand.

Most projects, that is 94 of them, were located in Bogotá. A smaller number was either in Barranquilla or Cartagena (15 and 16 respectively), which can be explained by the social circles in which Obregón's cousins moved. Most of the names referred to as owners/clients are industrialists and politicians. In short, the expertise of O&V was mainly in private housing located on the outskirts of consolidated urban areas in Bogotá. The height of the practice was immediately after the design of the Naval College project. .

Figure 103. Modernist spaces with local adaptations: Hotel Casino Cartagena, 1955
 © CARANGO

by design. It derives from the area about Heritage under my coordination, which had previous works on the subject. Cf. Estefani Vasquez and Eugenia Marin, 2008

²¹⁹ These theses have joined a current trend in the doctoral program at the Universitat Politècnica Catalunya about modern architecture in Latin America, which has been quite active in disseminating their work in recent years.

Furthermore, what is consistent is the modernist image. Their projects had high standards and appealed to both the social and economic elite. From its early stages, the practice developed a distinctive language in their projects through the regularity and clear organization of their spaces; simple geometric volumes; asymmetrical compositions; mastery of details and technical innovation with an avant-garde image and spatiality. All their projects incorporated the highest modern standards, while incorporating reinterpretations of traditional elements. i.e. interior gardens or courtyards. The universality of their proposals was presented as corresponding to the state of art of modern architecture. From this evidence, I deduce that their devotion towards modernity was conclusive for the assignment of such a representative project as the Naval College, regardless of their lack of experience in projects in terms of infrastructure, or with a similar magnitude. On the contrary, the Naval College boosted their activity.

• Other participants

The accounts of Edgar Bueno and Hernando Tapia tell us about the design practice at O&V in the 1950s and 1960s. According to Bueno, "Obregón put into practice what he had learnt while studying abroad. The design process in the office used to be a collaborative one", as Obregón used to organize his studio at the university. Tapia remembered how, "It was common to hold preliminary meetings in order to define parameters, and the main ideas of the project, and after developing some ideas individually, we would have another meeting to integrate a proposal that was later split up again, and designed and drawn in detail by different members of the team." This had been a common practice in American firms since the first decades of the twentieth century.²²⁰

Tapia claims that "the Naval College was a joint design [by Tapia] with Obregón, indeed it was more mine than his". As a matter of fact, Tapia was the one that went to live for three months in 1954 as a cadet in the old Naval College in order to learn about the internal practices:

²²⁰ Collective design practices at SOM have been the subject of a study by (Jung [2011])

I did not know how the Army [sic] works in general, and specifically the Navy, which has such an amount of particularities. I had not had any relations with vessels, or their life.

And later he adds:

The only way to understand what the recruits' and officials' life is like, how they organize, what they learn, what kind of exercise and activities they do, was by living there as a cadet. We never had a similar project before. So, I lived [...] under their discipline, [...] to do so, you need to have lots of energy, or little money.

But Obregón was also commissioned to visit other Naval Colleges in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. Apparently there were two commissions; the first attempt to travel mentioned by Admiral Lemaitre failed, as we will see, and there seems to have been a second commission to visit simultaneous projects in other Latin American countries, as reported by Admiral Eraso Annexi. ([2011])

Tapia (2010) asserts that the project was developed in a short period of time, so that, after living there, O&V had two months to present the project. The contact point with the Navy was always Obregón; Tapia attended no meetings. His interaction was limited to his experience at the former college in the design phase, and he never returned to see the project built. What is more, pictures showed to him in the interview held in 2010 were his first and only encounter with the Naval College built.

• **National cooperation among studios**

Until the late 1960s O&V used to focus on design. At the time it was common to cooperate amongst practices. Some of them even shared offices in the same building, as a prominent architecture of the time, Germán Samper Gnecco (2011) recalls. This facilitated the exchange of ideas and mutual support in design contests.

[having offices in the same building] was practical for interactions and cooperation among studios, some of which were informal, as the project belonged to another firm, but they would probably need some support.

They also interacted closely with engineering firms in order to define the feasibility of technical aspects in their projects. The construction of their projects was usually delegated to other architectural and engineering practices. The professional circle of architects and engineers was very close, as it developed from the 1940s, and built on their academic experience. It was also related to well-to-do groups that led the new associations, and with an aspirational group of young supporters.

In the 1950s and 1960s, when working in other cities, it was a common custom for Bogotá-based firms to create joint ventures with local architectural or engineering practices. In the case of the Naval College these were Alfonso Mejía Navarro and Leopoldo “Papo” Angulo García. The former was an engineer who had worked with Obregón on other projects on the Caribbean coast; the latter was a member of the local elite, whose role in the project remains unclear. In a small, tightly knit conservative society such as Cartagena, however, these links would have ensured local support.

In other interviews, there is also a reference to the participation of other firms – Pizano Pradilla Caro and Guillermo González Zuleta – in the design and construction. Domenico Parma may also have participated, as he did in the Los Andes hippodrome. Tapia mentions that “Germán Samper, as junior architect, participated tangentially in the design, as an external architect.” Tapia also mentions engineer Francisco “Pacho” Bermúdez as a participant in the project. However, when I interviewed Germán Samper Gnecco (2011), he did not acknowledge his participation in this project or in any other one of O&V. As for Bermúdez’s possible participation, Carlos Martínez in *Proa* mentions only Guillermo Bermúdez as a design consultant, which accords with

information on the cover page of the O&V brochure of the project. This information about Bermudez has not been recalled before in any of the studies about his work.²²¹

As in other projects, O&V delegated the actual construction of the project. The firm Pizano, Pradilla Caro built the first phase, of which there were several parts. There is also information about the participation in some structural aspects of the engineering firm Carlos Hernandez & Cia. Ltda.

Figure 104. Collaborative design at O&V office © O&V

The cooperation of other firms, as has been pointed out, is contradictory. However, it could also be unofficial. This practice was also extended to the execution of most projects with the participation of other firms. Samper mentioned in the interview how O&V used to work with other practices such as Pizano, Pradilla, Caro; Cuellar, Serrano, Gomez; the engineer Guillermo Gonzalez Zuleta; Guillermo Bermudez; Cuellar Serrano Gomez. In other words, contemporary architectural and engineering practices in Bogotá constituted a small circle of support; even if they were competing for similar projects, in the background they were cooperating with one another.

This cooperative practice allowed for the rapid development of projects, as they divided up various tasks. It also meant that information was both shared and separated out.

• **Connections with international studios**

From different interviews I received contradictory information about the possible participation of foreign firms in the design and construction of the Naval College. For instance, both Admiral Lemaitre (2009) and the architect William (Ceballos 2009a) agreed about the participation of “foreign advisors” in the project, without much clarity about their role, but acknowledging the importance and magnitude of the project.

²²¹ Guillermo Bermudez belongs to the generation of architects that developed from the 1960s and 1970s what was known as “Brick architecture”; his legacy has been widely studied. Cf. (Daza et al. 2009), (Bright Samper 2006), (Weiss Salas 2008)

Ceballos affirmed that “the same firm working on the CAN project”. This means, SOM would have participated in the project.

However, I did not find any information in the Bunshaft archives, nor in Louis Skidmore’s, or Nathaniel Owings’ about this or any project in Colombia. Remarkably, neither was there any information in these archives about the CAN project. Only one image of a different project, Gordon Bunshaft worked on – the Bogotá Bank, a private building they designed in Bogotá – was found. Unfortunately however, the relevant archives of the firm have not yet been consulted.²²² This would be a worthwhile step in the future.

Figure 105. Banco Bogotá’s image in SOM archives © AAA

SOM participation in CAN and Bogotá Bank is not disputed. Historical accounts found in Colombia also confirm it. At the time, and amidst the controversy generated around the CAN project, the Ministry of Public Works proudly published in their reports the participation of this US corporation. ([Colombian government] 1951-1957) Subsequently, this participation has been recorded in architectural and engineering history.²²³ These contradictions result quite surprising, even in the most publicized projects, as it generates, in turn, more questions about the real extend of the involvement and possible collaborations; which will be worth to note, it does not limit to SOM.

▪ Flows of information

Flows of information have been a relevant element in common in the interviews with architects from that time. There is a constant concern in following information and trends in different countries. Through various media, Colombian architects continually received information from the avant-garde centres. In addition to Colombians studying

²²² SOM archives are divided into the main branches they have operated. Apparently projects of Latin America were managed from the office in Chicago, but this information has not been confirmed.

²²³ See (Téllez Castañeda 1977; Niño Murcia 1991; Saldarriaga Roa 1986; Cortes Díaz 2006)

abroad, and visiting consultants at the Ministry of Public Works, already mentioned, there were other forms of diffusion.

One of these spaces comprised the universities, where architects taking part in these projects worked alongside foreigners. Scholars participating in cooperation programmes, and immigrants who came to the country during the Second World War, were active members of academia, and their impact still needs to be fully traced. As Jorge Arango (1953) has pointed out, “as the architecture schools were not created until 1936, the vast majority of the professionals who gave direction to these schools were educated abroad”. Without identifying specific names, he mentions how architects from France, Italy, England, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and the United States were actively taking part in the dissemination of modern ideas. Probably the most prominent ones are: Leopoldo Rother, Vicente Nasi, Bruno Violi, and Fernando Martínez Sanabria.

I also found at the studios of my interviewees complete collections of architectural journals. Germán Samper, Hernán Vieco, and Dicken Castro mentioned traditional journals such as *Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, *Architectural Forum*, *Architectural Record*, and *Progressive Architecture*. In addition to these, Obregón & Valenzuela journals have very diverse origins: *Arts & Architecture*, *Technique et Architecture*, *The Japan Architect*, *Detail*, *Interiors*, *Kenchiku Bunka*.

Figure 106. Study and discussion of foreign publications were a common practice at O&V office © O&V

Tapia (2009) recalls how part of the regular practice was to look at and discuss published projects. These publications provided a permanent intake about contemporary trends elsewhere. Their intention was to remain in the avant-garde, thus assuring their prominent position in the architectural realm.

6.3. How it was represented

Despite being the main feature at the exhibition of the National Plan of Public Works at the National Museum in 1955, the Naval College faded in the records afterwards. The same thing happened with other projects introduced to the community through models, drawings and photos. The material presented was intended to have a didactic character; massive models were built to represent the network of railways and roads. Graphic information was created to introduce new forms and spaces to the targeted public.

According to the available evidence about the exhibition, the material exhibited about the Naval College coincided with images reported in *Proa*, and in the brochure recently found in their archives. So, let us explore the images presented in both publications. It essentially comprised the model, and interior and exterior perspectives that intended to make the presentation of new spaces more didactical.

▪ *Proa*, journal of architecture

Some of the project's blueprints have been in the public domain through the journal *Proa* since 1955, in an edition "dedicated to the most relevant aspects of the Naval College under construction in Cartagena by the Government of the Military Forces". (Martínez 1955) This means that what is reported in the journal is the original project, and does not show the changes that were introduced later.

Images in the journal *Proa* show how detailed and complete the proposal was in 1955. The journal includes different images of the model, plans and perspectives, along with descriptions and comments presumably made by Carlos Martínez.²²⁴ It shows a diverse set of buildings that are part of the complex by presenting corresponding plans and façades. Even if the information in the journal is complete, it is still difficult, due to the scale and complexity of the project, to identify specific areas, or the level of definition achieved in the design. Martínez insists on the difficulty of the

²²⁴ Unless otherwise stated, architect Carlos Martínez wrote all content as editor and owner of *Proa* journal. This issue does not mention any collaboration; thus it is highly probable that the descriptions and comments are Martínez's own.

programme, from which one can interpret that it exceeded the magnitude of other contemporaneous projects.

Figure 107. ENAP chapel, library, theatre and cultural centre in sets: façades, plans, perspective © Proa

The article emphasizes the educative function of the Naval College. It does exclude two areas of the project that correspond to the whole zone for midshipmen and other petty officers, and the group of houses for officials and the director, without mentioning the reason for this omission; this suggests they may not yet have been designed. Comments on the military character of the complex are minimal. This emphasis on the scholarly function matches the interpretation and interest of the designers, and perhaps also of the government.

As mentioned above, the journal under the direction of Carlos Martínez was a firm promoter of modern architecture. This journal has been a valuable historical source for the study of this period in Latin America. A case in point is the research of the scholar Hugo Mondragón,²²⁵ who analyses the work of Carlos Martínez in using *Proa* as a medium to encourage modern architecture in Colombia, and other Latin American countries.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that this was the only project of the military government to receive such a comprehensive report in *Proa*. During the dictatorship,²²⁶ the journal concentrated on private houses, and private industries, which were subject to reference and analysis. It refrained from references to the military government, or to the work and projects undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works in this period. Neither did it make any reference to conflicts between the dictatorship and the Society of Colombian Architects - SCA, or other groups during the regime. There is no explanation or comment about this historical gap. However, from these omissions it is possible to infer that there was at the very least a certain distance of the editor from the

²²⁵ Carlos Martínez, *Proa's* founder and editor for more than 30 years, was also a prominent scholar in Colombia. Further references about this journal and its editor can be found in (Mondragón 2003), (Mondragón 2010)

²²⁶ Carlos Nino notes how, only after the regime fall, the publication registered the conflict about one of the most visible and controversial projects undertaken by the dictatorship, the National Administrative Centre. Cf (Niño Murcia 2011)

dictatorship. In general terms about the architectural realm, it has been difficult to identify a particular and consistent stance towards the regime. It clearly was a tense relationship, but the regime took favourable measures for the SCA that are still in force: By decree 1782, June 8th, 1954, the Society of Architects is the official Consultative Body of the Colombian government for the built environment policies and projects. Which means that technically the organism has a voice on state decisions about the built environment.

The introduction of issue number 91 of *Proa* makes a reference to the process undertaken by the regime:

Amongst the multiple projects that are currently under construction in Colombia, [the Naval College] is the most beautiful urban composition due to its precision, clarity, and order, in addition to the outstanding aesthetic qualities of its architecture. (Martínez 1955)

In his comments, Martínez even supports the continuation of this project, while raising the possibility, or even hope, of a change in the government.²²⁷

Sometimes, in our context, changes of leaders imply transformations of the most splendid initiatives. Hopefully, this magnificent project [the Naval College] will not suffer setbacks in its execution. If it were to change, even in a minor aspect, it would lose all its unity, its entire accent, and all its aesthetic significance. (Martínez 1955)

Therefore, one can conclude that despite the distance *Proa* takes from the political turmoil surrounding the Rojas government, the Naval College is of sufficient merit to break the silence of this journal about state projects.

²²⁷ As explained in Chapter 1, even if the regime was ratified by the National Assembly, there was increasing discontent in prominent circles.

▪ Official images of the project

In turn, the regime acknowledged the existence of this publication. The logbook of the Naval College records in 1955 ([ENAP] 1955b).²²⁸

The important journal of urbanism and architecture edited in Bogotá, *Proa*, dedicates its latest issue to the new Naval College to be built in Cartagena's bay. The cover of the journal shows the model of this important project, the interior pages show all of its aspects through photogravure of the blueprints, and perspectives of all the buildings. Mainly the offices, dormitories for cadets and students, cultural centre, hospital, technical and practical classrooms, workshops, marine training, dining rooms, gym, shop, etc.

What was published by *Proa* seems to have been what was provided either by the Ministry of Public Works, or DIPE, as an official image of the project. This includes the image of the model of the complex that was used whenever the Naval College was referenced. The black and white image shows the model diagonally, excluding the two extremes of Manzanillo Island – that is, the one that has the fortress of Manzanillo and the one beyond the sports area showing only roads that seem to continue. The model does not provide much information about the relation of the island to its surroundings. Indeed, when using a high contrast resource to highlight the constructions, it is difficult to distinguish between the terrain and the sea. It shows the entire occupation of the island, including some areas where it is not clear whether the image is showing a building or a delimitation of an area – i.e. according to the programme, areas that correspond mainly to training.

Figure 108. ENAP model became the official image of both the National Plan of Public Works and Naval College, 1955 © ENAP

²²⁸ Current officials of the Navy whom I contacted in order to gain permission to internal archives were surprised that the information about blueprints and perspectives had been publicly available since 1955. This in turn facilitated explaining the relevance of the architectural complex.

Unlike projects such as the CAN or other academic centres, no pictures of the construction process were made public or disseminated in the architectural history. Not until 2000 was an image of the Naval College under construction made public; it is published in the book of Germán Samper's son, Eduardo Samper, and Jorge Ramírez (2000). The image corresponds chronologically with the suspension of works between 1957 and 1959, and was taken by Paul Beer. As already explained, the link to this avant-garde photographer can be considered an indicator of how the project was regarded.

Having this lead, I then consulted the collection of the photographer Beer about the existence of other pictures. Indeed there are 49 images that are registered as being of the Naval College.²²⁹ In a basic list of Beer's material, there is a register of a set of photos requested by O&V on August 24th, 1957 in the Naval College (negatives 5221-5270). It is noticeable that the date is after the overthrow of the dictatorship. This means that these images were taken shortly after the construction works had been suspended. These images are fundamental to see the stage reached by this time in the construction process, and the original features of buildings. They are probably the most complete collection of images of modern architecture produced by architectural practices of the time, however, they have remained until now in a private collection.²³⁰

6.4. How it was interpreted

In terms of the magnitude of the project, as well as its quality as modernist architecture, one can consider the Naval College as a high achievement of the Rojas regime. It materializes the ambitions and strategies of the military government, as much as its inconsistencies. Different interpretations can be read into the project, depending on one's stance and role. In this section the reception of different actors will be presented. The account of different interpretations about the project cannot be

²²⁹ Information from the list of photos of Paul Beer archive

²³⁰ Once again, in the field trip I made in March 2013, I tried to reach permission to at least see the images. Unfortunately, no access to this private collection has been possible.

comprehensive, but includes the visible groups related to the architectural complex at the time.

▪ **Institutionally: Navy**

Consulting the historical archive of the Naval College itself, I found little reference to the construction or the project of O&V. Given the hierarchies of the institution, it is highly probable that the decisions about the architectural project were taken at a command level.²³¹ However, in the logbook of the unit, ([ENAP] 1946-1976) every minor event out of the ordinary is recorded. My visits and fieldwork have been documented, and a similar practice was common in the 1950s. Notably, the temporary residence of the architect Tapia was not recorded, nor was the contact point assigned to him at the time. Yet Ceballos (2009a), the field architect in charge of speeding up the continuation of the construction, confirmed that such a residency took place.

In short, all that the logbook of the unit briefly records between 1944 and 1964 about the architectural project of the Naval College in Manzanillo are the following:

- Assignment of terrains and beginning of works
- Annotation about the issue of *Proa* which features the Naval College project
- Visit of ministers to the construction field
- The movement in of the personnel, and the donation of old furniture
- A tree-planting day
- Nomenclature of buildings.

After 1965, the inauguration of other works and new buildings, different from the ones in the original project, is also barely recorded. The sparse information about the built environment of the Naval College found in the logbook seems to constitute a pattern in the official records. This could have various interpretations. On the one hand, the architectural project was a top-down decision. And, on the other, the newly built environment provided the space to develop the college's mission, but no more was expected from it.

²³¹ Historical information from the General Command of the Navy is held by the Naval History Academy: a board of retired officials.

Figure 109. ENAP still under construction was inhabited by cadets © ENAP

I assume there may be more records about the construction of the Naval College in the archives of the General Command of the Navy. Unfortunately, despite my trying on several occasions, the *Academia de Historia Naval* [Naval History Academy] was highly reluctant to provide access to the historical information inquiring about the 1950s. New generations of officials were much more collaborative for this research, officials from the time expressed more resistance on having an outsider looking at their information.

• Navy officers as users


My first approach to the Naval College project was through a family  taken in 1972.

Figure 110. Family memories: surprising modern architecture in a colonial city c. 1972 © MPSB

What drew my attention to it was that the picture featured a modern building in a city known for its colonial architecture. I found later that the building in the background was a regular image in several pictures from former officers. i.e. basically, officials from the 1960s and 1970s. However, the building was identifiable as part of the Naval College only by people who knew the institution.²³²

Traditionally each group of the Naval College has its class picture taken, which is published in the cadets' journal *Corredora* existing since the 1950s. Since 2008 the college has compiled most of its numbers. Remarkably, rather than a sculpture, a symbol, or any other monument, most pictures, especially from the first two decades,

Data restriction



feature identifiable exterior or interior spaces of the architectural complex. The iconic building that most frequently appears in the background is the one originally designed as dormitories – that is, the elevated pavilion on pilotis that has prominent *brise-soleils* on its facades.

Figure 111. Characteristic brise-soleils of the dormitories © AB

When the pictures are of the interior, the background features also recognisable elements of the new complex: a series of vaults and void bricks as decorative blocks, which correspond to social and circulation areas. Some of the spaces in the school would not immediately be apparent as part of the new complex. For example, in cases where the pictures were taken in areas such as classrooms or dining rooms, it could be more difficult to identify these spaces.

Figure 112. Solar calendar at ENAP since the 1970s has been taken as the representative building © MPSB

Yet, it is identifiable that since the mid 1970s, the use of these buildings as photographic background disappeared. Indeed, the publication made by the ENAP to teach the history of the space in Manzanillo, and highlight the most valuable buildings and meaningful memorials does not even mention any building of the O&V original project. It only includes the solar calendar building, built on 1970s. ([ENAP] [2008]) Most officials have been surprised by the interest of this research on these original buildings that are commonly neglected by their users.²³³

▪ **Framed invisibility in the city**

As has been mentioned, the Navy is part of the history of Cartagena. Its officials and recruits are an active part of the daily life of the city. Despite the demonstration

²³³ On every visit I have made, there are new personnel to whom I have had to explain the historical value of the original architectural project, about which they only know that was built during Rojas regime.

organized in the 1950s when the option of moving the Naval College to a different city, Barranquilla, was under consideration, reports in the media about the actual construction or the project itself are minimal, and limited only to the local newspaper.

In the historical archive of the city, there is no information about the Naval College's buildings. Even the foundation *Fototeca Histórica de Cartagena* – a private initiative to collect photos from the community that has a significant number of images of buildings from different periods of the urban development of the city – had no images of the college when consulted in 2009.²³⁴ Graphic evidence of the permanent presence of the Navy in the city refers either to social events or achievements of the force at sea.

Perhaps it may be worth reiterating that after the exhibition and initial publication in *Proa*, no other image of the building has been included in the scholarly literature. The only exception is the image commented on in Samper's book in 2000. It has essentially been overlooked both as urban space and in the architectural realm. This can question its initial relevance, or the reception after its construction. Perhaps it reflects the relation between the project as designed, and the context in which it is immersed.

6.5. Unexceptional project

According to the architect Tapia (2010), the firm did not receive a specific parameter, or premise, to develop the project, either from the Navy or from the Ministry of Public Works. As designers, their practice was to learn through the direct experience of similar projects, and to research projects published in international journals to which O&V subscribed. In the case of the Naval College, both designers in charge of the project had relevant experience to inform the design.

²³⁴ After Dorothy Johnson de Espinosa died, the foundation has had a period of instability and has reduced the activity that it initiated in 1988. In 2011 the archive of the foundation signed an agreement to continue with the *Universidad Tecnológica de Cartagena*, it thus has remained closed to the public consult while a digitalization process is undergoing.

In the interview held in 2009, Tapia acknowledged that this project was his reason for getting in contact with the institution, as he himself had no previous military instruction, nor any understanding about how these kinds of institution work. Tapia remembers that in 1954, during his time at the old Naval College, he had direct contact with various officials, and by doing so he and his colleagues learnt the particularities of the programme. Tapia received the impression that daily life within the academic centre was run according to a strict regime, but was not all that different from the routine he himself had had as a student at the Universidad Nacional campus in Bogotá. An individual with socialist concerns, and not a practitioner of any sport, he recalls how demanding the physical activities were, and the importance of hierarchy amongst the cadets. Tapia (2010) identifies these two aspects as determining elements for the design processes.

Obregón, as a keen sailor, had a better understanding of the marine space and practices. But as Admiral Lemaitre mentions, “it was an ambitious project, therefore, the Navy commissioned him [Obregón] to visit different Naval Colleges in the continent. I was in Brazil at that time [1954]. Obregón came to see the site there. He planned to travel to Argentina and Chile as well, but he became ill, and had to stay longer in my house, postponing the journey.” (Lemaitre 2009) Nevertheless, in a second interview Lemaitre (2010) opens the possibility of a later field trip to those Naval Colleges as it was important to have a point of reference of similar complexes. Indeed, Argentina’s Naval College had been built in the previous decade,²³⁵ while Chile built its Naval College between 1955 and 1957,²³⁶ which opens the possibility of some exchanges or parallels between designers.²³⁷

²³⁵ Some general information about the Argentine Naval College is at <http://www.escuelanaval.mil.ar/>

²³⁶ Information about the history of the Chilean Naval College can be found in <http://www.escuelanaval.cl/Escuela/historia.html>

²³⁷ It would be interesting to pursue a comparative study amongst different architectures of Naval Colleges in Latin America that were built in a similar period of time. However, it would require institutional support to enable access to these military bases in each country.

▪ Following the manuals

If we see the characteristics of the complex, they basically follow the common principles of modern architecture. No major differences can be traced from any other contemporary project. Indeed, it functions and follows a similar image as most modern facilities built in Colombia. The image of some robust and solid military construction cannot be found here, nor in other projects of the National Plan of Public Works.²³⁸

Figure 113. Modified perception of spaces through shades: cameras and corridors
view c.1960s © ENAP

Judging from the case study of a factory proposed in the Wittmann's manual, there are three main factors to be considered: "locality, visibility, vulnerability". These observations are by no means comprehensive, and derive from a simple replication of the civil defence guidelines. Conditions of defence have changed after more than 50 years, but the manual and architectural complex are in essence contemporary.

The location responds to an analysis of vulnerabilities. As one might expect, the location and urban articulation of the Naval College is strategic. The isolation and visual control of the bay provide the project with time for preparation. Admiral Ordoñez Rubio (2009) mentioned how the military base could rapidly respond to any anomaly in the bay with the combination of other facilities. The triangle formed by the Naval Base, the Naval College and the Naval social club could cover the internal bay area by cross-fire from land with less than 0.5 miles from each point.

It also defined a post of control near, but not adjacent to, two vulnerable areas of the city, namely the commercial harbour and the petrochemical assembly station. The college has created a tendency towards a more industrial development in the surrounding areas, changing the trend that was initiated in the 1940s in *El Bosque* sector, connecting towards the central area of the city by the Avenue "Gustavo Rojas Pinilla".

²³⁸ The scholar David Monteyne has traced the linkage between modern architecture and civil defence techniques. Monteyne highlights two factors about specific architectural objects identified as public fallout shelters: their operative character in case of action, and how they become normalized as a regular habitat. cf (Monteyne 2011)

In terms of the internal complex one can also observe certain correspondences to principles of defence. The complex does not have any prominent building. The maximum height is four storeys in the pavilions. So, given the distance from the other side of the bay, the visibility of these buildings is minimal. The island itself is identifiable, but does not draw attention to it.

Figure 114. Multiple schemes of circulation, free plan, and fragmentation of components: blueprints of cadets dormitories building © Proa 91

A technical survey would be necessary to verify this but, in principle, a visual comparison with the Pratt Institute manual (1942) demonstrates that the Naval College follows some of the guidelines for industrial camouflage “to reduce vulnerability”: the dispersion of buildings allows not only a scattering of core functions in the layout of the complex but also a reduction of damage, or what is called “localized damage”, due to the propagation of explosion waves due to the distances between them, the uneven volumes, and the liberation of ground floors, which takes the higher force of the wave. The proportion on the surface of blocks, which in some cases goes up to 1:9, also made them a “less easy target”.

Figure 115. Dispersed and elevated buildings to reduce vulnerability and adapt to climatic conditions © O&V

Unfortunately, I found these manuals at a late stage in my research, and did not have the opportunity to talk about them with the architects I interviewed from that time. Maybe they did not know them directly. Maybe they would not remember them. Nevertheless, it is striking that many of its principles were to some extent adhered to in the development of the architectural complex itself. Not surprisingly, PSYOP strategies were enforced.

6.6. Embodiment of the strategy

Once again, the number of contradictions in the data and gaps in the information coincide with the manner in which this architectural complex does not constitute a landmark in the city or within the institution. The latent presence of the Naval College, which is remarkably the largest academic campus and military space in Cartagena, suits the double game of visibility and invisibility that other projects of the National Plan of Public Works accomplished.

Analyzing spatial forms of power that were surprisingly constructed or planned during the regime lead us to identify how these infrastructural projects have framed the spatial practice. This Dovey states as an exercise that “can reveal ways in which built form marks territory, enables and constrains proxemic relations, frames behaviour settings and constructs cognitive maps” (Dovey 2008, 30)

This project executed by the Colombian practice O&V well illustrates how the dictatorship executed infrastructural projects in different regions of the country during the Cold War. Their urban impact and their legacy as architectural objects embody the complex game of different operations and strategies in the construction of the modern built environment. Yet, more remarkably, the Naval College also depicts how conflictive are the reception and interpretation of these projects.

Part III

7. Architecture as political project

Based on the analysis of the evidence collected, one could argue that the architecture developed as part of the National Plan of Public Works was a political instrument of the Rojas dictatorship. But then other questions arise, such as: to what extent were these state projects a direct materialization of the double-truth, i.e. welfare-warfare, of the military regime? Further, how permeated was the architecture with the strategizing around it, and how did this manipulation shape the design, mediation and reception of this architecture?

The construction of a new nation through the development of the built environment constituted one of the main policies of the Rojas government.²³⁹ This vast legacy has been largely overlooked. However, the multiple factors I have identified in connection with these projects not only make possible a crucial documentation (valuable in itself on account of the dispersion and complexity of the sources) but also begin to allow a review of the responses to them at the time and now. In a fragmented society such as that of Colombia, diverse and not necessarily coherent responses are entirely possible.

Figure 116. Framed projects, Urban Centre Antonio Nariño (CUAN) © Colombia en marcha

The double-truth game, that is the misleading strategy of offering believable information, whilst pursuing alternative objectives – through architectural and infrastructural projects deeply needed by communities undergoing a process of development – provides a fertile terrain for the generation of different reactions. Far more than the quality of the built environment produced during the mid-twentieth century, these reactions have conditioned the value attached to the works themselves, their social meanings, and the sense of belonging or attachment communities create with them: what I call the appropriation of these spaces.

²³⁹ It has already been discussed in Chapter 3 how the regime embraced a development agenda that was not reduced to architecture, and how the construction of national identities in Latin America responds to different logics

The process of modern urbanization in Latin America did not merely occur during the Cold War, but was heavily shaped by that latent conflict. As Kenneth Frampton noted recently, “We should tell ourselves once again, [...] that as far as Latin America is concerned, it was never possible to separate architecture from politics or from the rigorous modernizing drive which still makes up the intrinsic substance of its spirit.” (del Real et al. 2013)

Although not all the works built during the post-war were necessarily valuable as architectural projects, a better understanding of them and the reasons why they have been overlooked, provide a more balanced and critical assessment of them. Colombia, like other countries in Latin America, has a considerable built legacy that is still in use, although poorly understood and continually under threat, as we will see. This architectural infrastructure was meant to be essentially instrumental, but in the case of the National Plan of Public Works, the dictatorship claimed to build a new sense of nationhood through them. I will therefore explore the reception they have had. Such a close intertwining of an international and national political project with the propagation of an architectural language creates implications that question not only canons of the type and method of projects undertaken, but also how communities have related to them.

7.1. Architecture as artefact

The capacity of architecture to shape social and political processes also implies a cultural aspect. Once the double-truth of projects of the National Plan of Public Works becomes visible, that is, its welfare and warfare agendas, it adds elements to the discussion of architecture as artefact.²⁴⁰ The notion of architecture as a cultural product leads to the consideration of its multiple representations. In other words, the possibility of hidden agendas – as is the case with the state architecture promoted

²⁴⁰ The artefact as a cultural product has been a subject in material culture studies, and some of them have been related to the Cold War architecture. See (Whitfield 1996), (Colomina et al. 2004), (James 2006)

during the Rojas regime – questions how literally these architectural projects can be interpreted, thus indicating the limitations of studies reduced to the programme or materiality of the architectural project.

These architectural and engineering projects as artefacts, more than a neutral platform, materialized the ambiguity and contradiction of the Rojas dictatorship. Discussions about the multiple purposes, simultaneous dynamics or different outcomes enrich the comprehension of architecture as material culture. In this regard, it will be necessary to consider not only what a project represents in its most practical terms, but also the manipulations that can be deployed through what appear initially to be basic facilities. To accept that these infrastructural projects represented both the embracing of the novelty of modern life, and simultaneously the dictatorship's ambiguous political project, challenges us to question precisely what they both represented and misrepresented, as well as how they have been interpreted. In addressing these questions, a deeper understanding of the political potential of architecture will be attained through tracing the relationships of the direct and distant context of these projects.

Figure 117. Transparency and openness in the new architecture: ENAP Museum © Proa

▪ **Beyond contradictions**

Acknowledging the political capacity of the architecture, there is a value in recognizing architectural projects as material representation with multiple intentions, regardless of how much one would subscribe to its originating ideas. The more objectionable they are, the more necessary it is to understand them and their possible implications.

In this sense, one can move forward assuming that camouflage is a deceptive representation of an object in its environment. This distorted appearance aims to create a “mis-representation” for the observer. Representation has been an important aspect of cultural studies and aesthetics. However, it is commonly assumed to be a

direct depiction of certain ideas. This thesis argues that such ideas may have multiple levels of interpretation, particularly in the case of a deceiving rationale.

This argument questions, in turn, the idea that architectural objects, as artefacts, are a direct representation of reality. As artefacts, they might represent simultaneously different ideas, and ideals, which in some cases could imply the use of misleading information with some specific agenda that is not necessarily open to all levels and elements in relation.

These are arguments that may be common to other governments in the region. The apparent imposition and dominance of military governments, in the light of their urgency to create manifestations of their presence, may be a proof of their own vulnerability. However, the complexity of the idea of power and the multiplicity of its relation in architectural studies brings in more elements to question and decode.

The dynamic production of space, that is, of the built environment of a society, provides the grounds for stability and permanence, which are in a constant recreation and tension by agents of power. However, one can argue at this point that the more invisible the multiple relations and ideologies the milieu materializes, the more vulnerable is the society to internalizing its potential as a conditioner of the social collective.

7.2. Resisting utopia

Even if urban planning and the new architecture were part of a utopian project of nation-building that received extensive support from the military and foreign governments, they were not set against a blank canvas. Rather than being a collective project, the National Plan of Public Works was a top-down policy. The community of users was the receiver, but they were assumed to be spectators, as Ranciere defined it:

Being a spectator means being passive. The spectator is separated from the capacity of knowing in the same way as he is separated from the possibility of acting. (Ranciere 2009)

However, Latin America has not been entirely passive and submissive adopting these ideas. This might have different explanations, but I want to stress three of particular interest. Firstly, the National Plan of Public Works was focused on a consolidated, if fragmented, community. Architectural and engineering projects were placed in the service of social groups already configured. Secondly, it is possible to identify a group of intellectuals that led debates within Latin America about changes of paradigms and this rush of development breaking with the past. Cases could be located in Brazil, Uruguay or México, where José Vasconcelos, among others, published a series of essays on subjects ranging from Latin Americanism to aesthetics, that were widely disseminated in the Americas. And finally, simultaneously with the Allies' propaganda, the region was receiving as a counter-offensive a considerable influx from the Soviet bloc. As Nicola Miller (1999) has stated, the influence of communist ideas was addressed in the first instance to intellectuals. Raising voices to question the projects being carried out was perhaps a way for these spectators to emancipate themselves.

Emancipation is the process of verification of the equality of intelligence. The equality of intelligence is not the equality of all manifestations of intelligence. It is the equality of intelligence in all its manifestations. It means that there is no gap between two forms of intelligence. (Ranciere 2009)

This case study can exemplify different forms on which such conflictive relationship has occurred. Regardless of any effort of the regime to orientate the presentation of these state projects, the reception of such an intricate set of strategies may well be beyond control. Even if users grasped some understanding of them, the rational and emotional connection that these projects could have had was unpredictable. As one might expect, there was also a bottom-up process in the interpretation of the novel infrastructure.

In part, the association of these public works with the dictatorship may have conditioned the state projects' interpretation. We have seen how these projects helped

in the construction of the political capital of Rojas, but then one questions about how the resistance to the dictatorship, led by intellectuals amongst others, may have conditioned the reception of its outcomes. This may help to explain the (hardly open) opposition to some of the projects recorded in debates in the media and professional associations, as was the case with the CAN project.

• **Cultural disdain**

Following on different approaches to understand the overlooked legacy, I focus now on the user's community that received this state architecture, which has already been identified as exterior and not inert. It is a community that had no connection with, and developed no sense of belonging to, the Plan's state buildings. I bring into question whether correspondingly, as the dictatorship was using a soft power to introduce a double-truth with the National Plan of Public Works, so did the community establish a soft reception of them. A practical subversion of the enforced modernity could be the use of the facilities detaching them of any meaning.

The lack of appreciation is tangible not only through the experience of the city where, as in the case of the Naval College, their construction has been ignored by the city, but also for the inhabitants of the campus. Such disregard of this architecture is also noticeable in more public and recent debates. Obviously, after more than 50 years, new expectations and needs about these spaces will appear, but the case has been enhanced as there is a new trend of interventions in Colombian cities. Perhaps some the most visible projects from the 1950s have recently received more support from an informed community in their defence. A case in point could be the debate held during 2009 about demolishing of the international airport in Bogotá, an indicative modernist building associated to Rojas, which has ended up on the authorization of demolition of the original air terminal. The current trend indicates a threat even for the most prominent examples of modernist architecture.

Figure 118. Former image of El Dorado Bogota's airport c.1970s © GT

One of the first debates about the value of these projects was related to the *Caja Agraria* (Agrarian bank)²⁴¹ building in Barranquilla, one of the few buildings recognized as a prominent example of modern architecture by the traditional canon, that has been listed as national heritage since 1995.²⁴² Nevertheless, since 2006, academic, popular and legal debates about the architectural value and social significance of the building have taken place, trying to reverse the order issued by a judge on May 10th 2011. The judge ordered the demolition of the building in response to the request – supported by 18,337 signatures – of the local, and regional government, *Universidad del Atlántico*, i.e. a departmental public university,²⁴³ the regional Society of Architects, and a civic association called “Love for Barranquilla”. (Cortissoz Cabrera 2011)

Figure 119. *Caja Agraria* in Barranquilla, 1953-1961 remarkable example of modern architecture © MLR-UNC

According to Jaime Cortissoz Cabrera, former president of the regional Society of Architects and president of the civic association leading the demolition initiative, the argument for removing the listed status of the building was that even if the building has outstanding aesthetic and historic characteristics as an example of modern architecture, it fulfils no other criteria:

The technical aspect, as most of the brise-soleils on the façade were oxidized [...]. And social appropriation, as most people from Barranquilla do not appreciate, nor recognize this building as its cultural heritage. [...] this lack of appropriation was reaffirmed with a public poll of *El Heraldo* [local newspaper] on March 28th, 2008, which outcome shows that 90% [of the locals] support the demolition. Conclusion: turn down the *Caja Agraria*!

²⁴¹ The project was originally planned on 1955 were the location was defined, and the design was given in Bogotá to the Spanish architect Fernando Martínez Sanabria. It was built on 1961-1965.

²⁴² The Colombian official denomination “National Cultural Asset” will be equivalent in the United Kingdom to the “Listed grade I”.

²⁴³ *Universidad del Atlántico*.

Notably Cortissoz, as an informed professional, admits the architectural value of the modernist building, but rapidly discards this as a valid argument to preserve the construction, on the basis of the unloved condition it has.

Figure 120. Technical detail of Caja Agraria's brise-soleils: one of its most prominent features © MLR-UNC

In a discussion that addresses more the tension between the national, and the regional and local governments, other voices have portrayed the situation. As mentioned by Humberto Mendieta, "I know nobody [in Barranquilla] that appreciates the Caja Agraria building. It is a landmark in the city, but it does not have any sense of belonging attached to it." (Mendieta 2011) The building has been seen since its construction as an imposition to the city from the national government, which in the still on-going legal process represents the part concerned with the preservation of the building.

Admittedly, some of these projects have become either obsolete or insufficient, and thus plans to transform them have drawn attention to works built in the mid-twentieth century, which in turn have incited debates about the value these projects have for the communities involved, included the "informed community". The results in most cases have not favoured these modern architectural buildings.

▪ **Silence: repression or resistance?**

Historically, the regime's National Plan of Public Works has sunk into oblivion. Individual projects related to it have remained in use as they still comprise an important percentage of the infrastructure available. The process of visible invisibility has continued over time. These projects are in the better cases disregarded.²⁴⁴ Here we come to the initial point of this research. The established canon of studies has informed not only the education of connoisseurs-to-be, but has also, by extension, shaped public opinion, which has already received a considerable charge on its own shoulders.

²⁴⁴ The scholar trend on the identification of valuable objects in terms of their architecture, has an urgent pedagogical demand, if there is an interest on preserving them.

Undoubtedly, the experience of the dictatorship's excesses permeated the negative connotations of the political upheaval, and its products, including its architecture. That may be inevitable, and is to some extent understandable. Yet the question is what sense, if any, is there either in continuing to replicate what has been said already, or in leaving unexplored gaps, which have been identified.

After identifying the scope of the Plan, and its pervasiveness, established arguments minimizing its importance or complexity lose their credibility. The silence about these works deserves a better comprehension. According to this logic, I am revisiting what it is possible to identify as a common point on the exclusion of these architectural projects from the canon of studies. This can be extrapolated and better understood as the paradox of the spectator. This is the non-passive reception. There are as many possible explanations as there are historians, but here I explore some alternatives.

At first sight this silence – that is, the exclusion or denial – could be forced by the imposition of the regime, or by a lack of resources proper to the bewildering strategies in control. No doubt daring to challenge the official version of the state, trying to find data from the local and immediate resources – that one can imagine were even more enclosed at that time – proved at least for this research to be restrictive, biased, and ultimately insufficient. However, it is necessary to make an explicit point: the information does exist. Even if it responds to the already explained strategies of fragmentation, distortion, incompleteness and so on: the fact is that official records still exist.

Evidently the inscription into postmodern influences as mentioned by Felipe Hernandez (2002) have played a role. Dismissing outcomes due to its aesthetic identification with a current of thought has reinforced the silence in the Colombian canon of architectural history written in the 1980s and 1990s. But then the justification for what has happened in the last nearly 20 years remains unresolved.

Hence, alternative explanations are worthy of consideration. One of these is that silence has been a voluntary response as a form of resistance – in other words, an emancipatory form against the imposition of projects by the dictatorship. Despite the validity of such expression, the result has proved highly obstructive at least in two aspects. On the one hand, we have seen how even the informed community

disengages from these modernist projects. On the other, there is the almost total lack of accurate survey and analysis of what was built in the mid-twentieth century. The silence has thus nurtured the lack of understanding and valuation of modernist projects.

Fortunately, emerging scholarship is addressing this gap. As Kenneth Frampton noted recently, “Latin America is a continent [sic] whose time has indisputably arrived after half a century of provincial amnesia and neglect.” (del Real et al. 2013)

7.3. Conflictive identity

In the publication of the first anniversary of the regime, the DIPE excludes information about capital cities, instead introducing information about middle-sized cities and dispersed towns, whilst affirming:

Certainly, never in the history of the country, a renewing movement, a government, a new hope, have produced such unanimity, and a wider participation of all Colombians. This popular initiative, and for the people, is a demonstration that the country is standing up, and perhaps for the first time, it could be said the state exists, not only as a bureaucratic organization [...], but as the one with the meaning given by the prominent German thinker: “State is ‘being in form’ of a popular unity guided and portrayed by power”.²⁴⁵ (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 16)

Territorial presence was idealized as a form of the state. It was necessary intervention to ensure the control upheavals of violence in rural areas. And it was immediately associated with the achievements in the pacification of the most

²⁴⁵ It is not clear to which German thinker it refers. Yet, it shows awareness of international trends.

problematic zones. The active presence of the state in regions such as the coffee-growing area, or the eastern plains facilitated that appreciation.

Paradoxically, the state gained an almost invisible presence in different regions of the country through a modern infrastructure. Communities have been immersed in it; yet the built environment has been the support stratum without creating meaning or any attachment to. Public buildings have largely been identified, and used as facilities provided by the state. Perhaps it is that identification with the state, and in particular with the Rojas regime, that contributes to the contradiction. In other words, this stigmatization can be associated with the political resistance generated by this dictatorship.

Figure 121. Press clipping about a new project for a bus Service Centre (i.e. bus terminal) 1954 © El Tiempo

The regime was clearly identified with the provision of social services of modern life, but at the same time it was highly repressive and corrupt. (Lasso Vega 2005) The result was an immediate bitter-sweet reference to the state, which may have reflected on the difficult relations established with the newly built environment. The rejection of the dictatorship may well be translated into a reluctance to accept whatever that government represented, including its architecture. Nevertheless, this would not entirely explain the situation, as democratic and totalitarian regimes alike have developed modernist projects in Latin America, as elsewhere, over more than 40 years. It would be reductionist to focus only on the geopolitical response, excluding cultural interpretations of the phenomena.

Therefore, neither will the connection of the territory be a defining element to encourage a sense of belonging, nor will the rejection of the state be persuasive enough to deconstruct a national identity. At this point, then, it will be necessary to explore alternative aspects to understand how state-sponsored projects of the mid-twentieth century have resonated, and what have shaped their interpretations; in other words, how architectural objects have a dynamic role in the fluidity implied in the construction of national identity.

▪ **Creation vs. imposition**

The construction of a new national identity was conclusive of the incursion into modernity – at least in the political discourse. The case of the Colombian National Plan of Public Works can be taken as an indicator of how being immersed in a given reality does not necessarily parallel the development of a sense of belonging and social appropriation. The regime claimed that state-sponsored projects were the result of the ambition of communities. It was a state interpellation of “the desire of the people”; (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954a, 3) however, the historical records make visible how these projects were a request of the dictatorship:

On February the 11th, the directorate of information and propaganda of the state sent to [all] mayors of the country a circular asking those towns that had not started any [infrastructural] work spontaneously, to begin the construction of any of general utility. That circular quotes: the directorate of information and propaganda of the state clearly reiterates that the government is not demanding from you or the population excessive expenses [...] the project should be called “June 13th”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 17)

Nevertheless, in the same text, the dictatorship emphatically discouraged any demand of financial support from citizens: “wrongly, such a gracious date [i.e. June 13th] could become a reason for economic sacrifices or new taxations”.

Infrastructural projects were also the logical support for the industrial development of the nation, even if not all the projects seem to have a direct connection. A case in point would be Rojas’ speech in Barranquilla, which highlighted projects in the region such as a hydroelectric power station in the Sierra Nevada area, the road between Barranquilla and Santa Marta, housing in Barranquilla, the extension of the aqueduct, a hospital, and works to dredge the Bocas de Ceniza delta. Rojas described these as “[a]mongst the priority projects in order to improve the industrial and general development of this region”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 159)

Along with the social conflict, and the struggles of the rural communities, new projects were highlighted but these did not constitute a priority for the common audience. It is significant, however, that the 1940s to the 1960s represented the only period when there was a weekly section relating to new developments in the built environment in several newspapers and periodical magazines – i.e. every Tuesday in *El Tiempo*, or every Thursday in *El Espectador*.

According to records in the media, these projects were not perceived by communities as fundamental to the development of nationhood, but as an answer to a greatly desired modernization and industrial growth, and indeed, as the collateral effect of internal migration from rural areas.²⁴⁶ However, Téllez asserts: “many of those ‘public works’ were far less important to communities”, arguing that “[these projects] were simply appearing as they really were. [...] They were random and improvised.” [emphasis in the original text] (Téllez Castañeda 2013)

Figure 122. MOP reports using popular icons to resemble mass support for National Plan of Public Works © Un país que trabaja

The provision of welfare services and the restrictions of a military regime were intertwined. The authoritarian modernization pervaded the urbanization process, and pretended to define what may constitute a cultural reference. Even if the dictatorship claimed to have popular support, it was eroded by the excesses of force, and lack of consistency between actions and discourse. Rojas creation of a national identity was conceived as a top-down process, with wider concerns than the local and direct relation of those who were to experience the new spaces.

Identity, as a social construction, has an intrinsic flux. It emerges from relationships, and shared beliefs: it is not a unidirectional or fixed product. (Anderson 2004) Therefore, pretending that an unclear National Plan of Public Works would be passively received by the local population – the users of these projects – ensured a failed rhetoric about the creation of national symbols; which, as a result, are disregarded as can be drawn both, by the architectural history, and by the current

²⁴⁶ This topic has been discussed by (Saldarriaga Roa 1984)

neglect of this legacy. Imposition of a pretended element of identity drives to resistance towards it.

Within cultural studies of the region, Jens Andermann has suggested “the idea that the image, in Latin America, historically constitutes a contested site, one at which figurations of identity and alterity are constantly reproduced as well as re-assembled and re-signified”. (Andermann et al. 2005) This in part derives from Derrida’s proposal that identities emerge from exclusion and difference. (Curtin et al. 2007) The question therefore is to what extent the imposition of an “identity” may have created an “alterity” towards modernity.

▪ **Unfamiliar spaces**

The repercussions of the state architecture promoted by the dictatorship are difficult to define precisely. In the first instance, as has been commonly reported in the few scholarly references to the Plan’s projects, they were not understood, either at the urban or architectural levels. However they clearly shaped the urban development. As mentioned by José Salazar

During this period [1950s] the interventions “without plan” are of great magnitude, and produced significant changes in the city. Some examples of public initiative are the ones that have defined the future development of the city, defining growth and occupation trends on the territory, vitality, activity areas, among others, as well as a common language in the architectural forms. (Salazar Ferro 2007)

Although urban studies have been relevant in the construction of the collective character, the literature has persistently presented a superficial and fragmented interpretation of projects developed all around the country.

Projects of the National Plan of Public Works were, initially, alien objects in their communities. Neither did its users understand the rapid adoption of new forms of

space.²⁴⁷ In the interview held with Captain Gustavo Ramírez García (2009),²⁴⁸ who was a recruit of the first group trained in 1961 at the Naval College, he genuinely recalls one aspect that marked his memories of the first years in Manzanillo in his late teens: “initially we thought that the buildings were designed to ‘sink’ into the terrain”. In other words, they expected the free plan of the ground floor that was composed only by structural pillars to be part of the foundation of the building, which with time and weight of the upper volume would penetrate the terrain, leaving the first floor as access level. The buildings to which he was referring were the dormitory pavilions. Which indeed initially had some structural problems as their foundations failed and the building went down in the ground some centimetres. (Ceballos 2009b)

Two features contribute to this reading: first, the contemporary unfamiliarity with the prism’s elevation on pilotis that related not only to the formal composition common in the modern language, but also to prevent the expansive wave of explosions as part of the war tactics we have seen; and secondly, the technique used to raise the level of the island’s terrain through a traditional system of consolidating the soil by digging wooden pilotis, a technological innovation that raised curiosity not only among users but also in the construction industry. (Roa 2007)

Figure 123. Image of the elevated pavilions at ENAP: users confronted with novel forms ©Corredera

At a time of latent international tension and national struggle, projects of the National Plan of Public Works were presented individually, the public information about them always being fragmentary, ambivalent, and sudden. The saturation of information about individual projects with repetitive and partial data made it difficult to fully understand the new objects. In addition, after more than 50 years – and with the lack of information – it is difficult to identify which projects were exclusively the initiatives of the national government²⁴⁹ and, more importantly, how they related to various local, regional, or foreign networks.

²⁴⁷ There is a distance from the image published in magazines and the practical understanding of the space or new living standards.

²⁴⁸ I interviewed Captain Ramírez García about his memories of his first years a recruit at the ENAP in 2009, at the ENAP, Cartagena (Ramírez García 2009)

²⁴⁹ As opposed to foreign or local governments, or other organizations or individuals.

Two main aspects of consideration should be highlighted here. The strategic operation of the built environment not only introduced new forms that convey simultaneously the modernization of new living standards, and the protection sought in war-time, but the built environment was also highly shaped by the dictatorship's manipulation of the information to frame its ambitious infrastructural projects. Propaganda was more easily assimilated than new spatial practices.

My contention in this respect is that the poor level of understanding and awareness, combined with the saturation of information around projects of the National Plan of Public Works, contributed to the lack of identification they originally generated. It was not only an issue of the difficulty of relating to the new. Clearly, resistance to the new language joined with the manipulation of information to make it even more difficult to interpret what was not only unfamiliar but intended to be unknown. The built environment was instrumental in a double-truth strategy, of which only part of the whole agenda was public knowledge.

- **Normalized but ignored**

Users of the new infrastructure were conceived of and remained as external actors. These projects were meant to be used by the population: they were not isolated posts of control or dummies.²⁵⁰ Given the precariousness of the country, urbanization was a double opportunity to secure the territory whilst providing modern facilities. Indeed, the National Plan of Public Works addressed, at least in theory, popular aspirations and necessities. People had access to them in their everyday lives. They defined urban patterns, and consolidated new areas. Some of them have constituted local landmarks, even if they only allow a limited visual connection. By the 1970s modern projects had become unexceptional in the urban landscape as they constitute nearly 70% of urban areas. (Aprile Gniset 1991)

The regime incentivized the construction of projects resembling this modernity – for instance, it gave higher subsidies for the use of materials such as concrete. Building

²⁵⁰ Dummies practice occurred mainly in European cities during the Second World War. See (Cohen 2011)

projects were developed faster, helping rapid urban growth. Most urban areas were extended and developed after the 1950s. They become, therefore, the common image of the city. A building with formal abstraction, innovative techniques, concrete as a preferred material, and innovative functions became ordinary in the landscape. In consequence, these infrastructural projects were normalized in the everyday experience of intermediate and large cities.

Recently, an architectural historian specializing in Brazilian modern architecture, Fernando Luiz Lara (2008) has claimed that, in contrast to the usual reception of modern architecture, in Brazil it has become highly popular and accepted as an image of progress. However, from the Colombian perspective, I would argue that there is a difference between being normalized, and developing a sense of belonging and identification with the built environment. In other words, just because a community is immersed in a specific context it does not necessarily mean that it is significant for the community. Other areas and architectures have created more tangible bonds.

The function as modern conveniences, and nothing else, has been the reason to relate to these architectural projects; they are part of new living standards that have been internalized. Yet the materiality of these buildings has been ignored if not disregarded. The places do not belong to users; they have no control over, nor appreciation of them. The experience of the space of these public buildings is subject to institutional guidance. Therefore, public facilities become an overlooked container of urban life.

It would be worth mentioning that rare exceptions make even more notorious the lack of appreciation of most of the projects. One might presume that infrastructure in general terms would not be a particular source of a sense of belonging. But it would be necessary to return to the distinction between different types of buildings of the National Plan of Public Works. On the one hand, buildings that explicitly represent the state are usually conceived as urban and social landmarks. As the scholar Caroline Humphreys (1973) has pointed out, infrastructural buildings aim to represent values and ideologies in power – in this case, the creation of the new nation. On the other hand are modern facilities that might adjust more to characterless commodities, which

in this case will be related to the development ambition. Curiously enough, prominent exceptions are two remarkable facilities. One is the *Universidad Industrial de Santander*,²⁵¹ which was the biggest academic campus in the north-east region of the country. The other is Medellín's airport Olaya Herrera, which received acceptance and constitutes a key reference point of the city. (Londoño Marin et al. 1957)

Figure 124. Modern spaces carrying a positive social meaning such as Olaya Herrera Airport, Medellín © Alejandro Agudelo

The point to highlight here is that, regardless of the function, the appreciation and sense of belonging by the community towards these buildings did not respond to the expectations and discourse of the dictatorship. Most of them were used, and integrated in the daily life of urban areas, but have been ignored as architectural objects. No other value than that of modern service was attached to these state projects.

▪ **Refused as national representation**

The complexity of the period makes it necessary to consider alternative features. I recall here two political aspects we have seen, that may well have some impact on the reception of these projects. Both fluctuations in the discourse of a regime trying to remain in power and the political instability from the end of the second year in power (1955), that led to a rapid change of power returning to the traditional structures in 1957, may have played a part in the response towards these projects. But this was a common phenomenon of the Cold War in the region.

The emerging scholar Luis Castañeda (2013) argues that in Latin America the deployment of "developmentalism" in the 1950s rapidly changed to internationalism from the 1960s onwards. Conversely, Andrea Giunta (2005), referring to Argentinian evolution in art, noted a synchronicity in discourses: "the internationalist project [was] complementary to the project of nation-building". Giunta emphasizes how the ideal of

²⁵¹ The general plan of this campus was created before the Rojas regime, but during that government most of their buildings were constructed.

internationalism assured not only the condition of modernity but also the ambition to be on a level with centres of reference, namely Europe and the United States – to which I concur, adding that this interest in foreign countries was also related to shared aspirations and fears, as mentioned by Rojas, when addressing a circle of engineers and architects, and presenting his idea about the construction of a new state “beautiful and modern, similar to great American or European cities”. (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1953b, 244)

The message about modernity received by the community along with these projects was directly related mainly with the United States, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. In Colombia, magazines such as *Cromos* played an important role in disseminating the modern living standards of these countries, as a driving paradigm. As noted by Valerie Fraser (2000), “in some ways the modern was synonymous with the foreign”.

The state strategy played in multiple dimensions: firstly, an interest in constructing significance as a fellow country of others in the Western Hemisphere, which was related to the aspirational image as a modern country; secondly, consolidating the sisterhood of Latin American countries, whilst aspiring to a new nation. And, finally, there was the urgency of creating a difference from what at the time was identified as negative: communism. These dimensions thus emphasized the exterior identification of Colombia as a modern non-communist Latin American country, and indeed situated it in a prominent position for multinational organizations of the period, as discussed previously. Nevertheless, the internal work of social cohesion was a task left behind. An extended history of inequality and social fragmentation made this a difficult enterprise.

Inconsistently, the emphasis on this alien origin had simultaneously both a positive and a negative connotation. Namely, what was positive was the possibility of paralleling with leading centres of the world. Simultaneously, it carried a negative side as the European and the United States’ innovations preserved the nuance of an imported, if not imposed, image, in which the local character was not easily perceived. Notably, in 1959 the editorial article of the issue of *Art in America* dedicated to Latin American art contended that “the lack of differences, the extraordinary coincidence in style and viewpoint” between art from North and South America, was taken as a “proof of the

strength of the bonds that unite the Americas". ("Special issue on Latin American art. Editorial" 1959)

Modern architectural projects of this period responded to an international image, and new standards. The reality is that spaces may have had a different language but some of them retained a traditional organization, or even building techniques. Despite how different they may have appeared, they were not entirely alien. These projects created adaptations to the local conditions, making even more efficient available resources, as we have seen with the Naval College.

One could remark therefore that this internationalism implied two ironies that have been discussed in previous studies. (Silvia Arango 1996, 1989) At one level, in the search for what in the modern postulates was identified as "universal image", the singularities of the national were diluted if not omitted. At another level, the label of "foreign" created more resistance, as it reinforced the alien origin.

Yet these premises could be considered near-sighted, oversimplifying the dismissal of these state projects, which in some cases had reached the level of rejection, as we have seen. Other architectures that have been considered proper to the national identity have also a foreign origin. For example, just to mention the two most prominent ones: the traditional centres of major cities have either the Spanish urban and architectural tradition, or the "Republican" image, which corresponds to the adaptation of alternative references such as neoclassical architecture. Therefore, invalidating this argument makes it evident that these explanations tend to overlook relevant historical facts.

Figure 125. Universal and local spaces in the interior of ENAP: modern construction adapted to the context © ENAP

In an effort to rescue the validity of internationalism as a premise in building modern nations in Latin America in the mid-twentieth century, Giunta (2005) has argued that national identity was constructed not in the otherness, but in the indifference towards a global modern world. Controversially, Brillembourg (2004) acknowledges that local, or national, projects did not aim to create a particular expression, but that in different ways this architecture adopted features in order to adapt to the context, in particular to the climatic conditions of the tropics. Trying to

respond to the question of how “Colombian” architecture developed as part of the National Plan of Public Works, I concur with the view that in the case of its architectural projects there is no evidence that a nationalist image was ever pursued. No specific guidelines for these projects were in rule. Yet adaptations and innovations respond to the available resources, and to the international modern image.

7.4. Mediating architecture

The circumstances in which the new architecture was introduced, through a hasty run of small and dispersed projects, conditioned the user’s approaches to these spaces: the mediation of this architecture shaped its integration and assimilation. The regime highly mediated the infrastructural and architectural projects of the National Plan of Public Works. Not only were they used as a political tool by the military government, but also the influx of other forces and generators of opinion, such as the media, and the informed community, obscured the interpretation and more natural assimilation of the works.

Regarding the mediation of architecture, Adrian Forty (2012a) has pointed out how it has a capacity to transform the relation of the observer or user with an object, acting as filter that frames the interpretation of the space. Thus, questions arise as to the extent of the dictatorship’s control over the process of both creation and representation. One can assert that the way in which National Plan of Public Works’ projects were presented, exhibited, but also polemicized, shaped the public reception of them.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, regardless of the continuous flow of information, there was a lack of knowledge about these projects. The mediation did not intend a better comprehension or relation of users with the new spaces. They were just part of the political game. Propaganda spread in the media about these projects was addressed to the determination of accomplishing new living standards and development. Addressing a crowd in a small town, Pacho, Cundinamarca, Rojas affirmed: “The budget of the Ministry of Public Works and the ICT will provide for the

construction of hygienic and modern buildings for workers and middle class groups". (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1955)

The assimilation of these projects was framed from the time of their conception, construction and experience. The particular mode in which state buildings were understood, or not, was conditioned with the ambition of achieving the modernity of the most developed countries.

Figure 126. Hybrid and everyday architecture: alternative response to modernity:
hall inside the pavilions ENAP © MPSB

However, involving local communities was rarely considered. As mentioned in the case of the Naval College, some studios of local professionals participated at some stages of the project, but that was all. There is no reference in the archives about concerns to involve communities in defining the projects they would receive. Users were conceived and addressed as observers, even better as external observers – in other words, as spectators. In this respect, Ranciere (2009) argues:

Being a spectator means looking at a spectacle. And looking is a bad thing, for two reasons. Firstly looking is put as the opposite of knowing. It means being in front of an appearance without knowing the conditions of production of that appearance or the reality which is behind it. Secondly, looking is put as the opposite of acting [...] without any power of intervention.

I have discussed the extent to which this architecture has been passively received. At this point, my stress is on the presentation of the architectural object as the embodiment of the political project; but part of the contradiction one may find concerns the relative freedom with which architects created their projects. One could therefore claim that, more than the object itself, it was the mediation of architectural projects that was politicized.

▪ **Soft counter-offensive**

The subversion towards power is to be expected, as Certeau (1984) has argued. In this case, it takes different scopes, one of which is the non-passive response towards the mediation itself. In consonance with the use of – until then – non-conventional means, puzzled reactions are unsurprising. Understanding how the reception operated by different actors evolved through history requires the observation of two-way strategies and practices of power.

We have analysed some of the reactions from the immediate community of users, which indeed can be surprising enough. Other interpretations can be read not only from what is in the archives and literature, but from what is absent. Which proves my point about how the illustrated community has interpreted the regime's infrastructure, and how their informed opinion has created an impact on the reception of this infrastructure. In other words, how what has been ignored or forgotten has also shaped the interpretation of the phenomena. Hence, I will take the notion of emancipation suggested by Ranciere (2010) – after assuming the active role of the spectator – that in turn, benefits from the idea of “counter-memory”, where through interpretation of the given reality, it becomes transformed, and lastly reconfigured.

Authors such as Andrea Giunta (2005) have claimed that cultural exchanges, as instruments of mutual persuasion, were uneven in their impact and reception, taking into account that in Latin America exhibitions about US works took a prominent place, whereas those from the region were relegated to marginal spaces.²⁵²

And it is here that foreign tensions of the Cold War became entangled. Interestingly, foreign references about the development of modern architecture in Colombia coincide with the more apprehensive international relationships of the regime.²⁵³ The economic and politic report of [1955] states:

Internal threats to political stability were apparent in several countries due primarily to the unpopularity of governments with

²⁵² Alexander Gonzalez (2011) presents an extended document about exhibitions in the construction of Pan-American ideal.

²⁵³ Interest of Colombian can be traced from it registers in different journal and magazines at the Forum issue of November 1946.

important groups within their countries, economic difficulties, or a combination of the two. The dissatisfaction of important elements was obvious in Argentina, Colombia, Cuba and Guatemala. (Novak et al. 1998)

Remarkably, there is a temporal correspondence in late 1955 with the distance between the Rojas and US governments, the reduction of programmes of technical cooperation of foreign agencies, and the noticeable absence of references to Colombian architecture in international records of the time, which it would be worth noting were commissioned by the MoMA, as part of the cultural exchanges. Earlier reports about architecture, as the one from Giedion argues, Colombia as much as Finland, Brazil, Venezuela were: “centres of new vitality.”

Countries which have been slumbering in their own lethargy or under oppression begin to awake and to become active participants in an evolution which is encompassing the entire world. (Giedion 1958)

Apparently, the architecture emerging in Colombia as a reference of modernism, but later this disappears. It thus vanishes from the most disseminated literature. It would be nonsense to deny the importance of achievements of other countries such as Brazil and México, but the point addressed here is the reduced visibility of other prominent examples such as the case of “notably Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, and Uruguay”, which are identified by Hitchcock as “architecturally active”. (Hitchcock 1954a)

Tracing documents of the US cooperation and cultural exchanges at the Rockefeller Archive Centre (RAC), I found that when exploring the region gathering information for the exhibition, and publication at the MoMA, they had local contacts in each country. They were meant to be a knowledgeable source about the latest developments in terms of architecture. In this sense, Molina (2012) reports the existence of a list of contacts in Latin America that Sert sent to Hitchcock, which is in the collection at the Smithsonian and might or might not coincide with the report

prepared at the MoMA as a briefing for the delegation of the survey, mentioned by Del Real.²⁵⁴ I have not consulted them.

Nevertheless, in the Nelson Rockefeller collection for the Inter American system, I found a report relating to the MoMA project in Latin America, which indicates that the architect Dicken Castro acted as Colombia's contact point for the MoMA. (Hitchcock 1955-1957) In retrospect, Castro himself was a surprise, his internal position in the country at the time being not particularly relevant,²⁵⁵ but his presence may be explained as he was a former student at the Oregon-Eugene University, which probably gave him key international contacts. Castro's correspondence with Hitchcock remains in the collection of the latter in the Smithsonian archives.

In the interview I had with Dicken Castro, (2011) he did not remember any contact with the MoMA in the 1950s nor any selection or participation in that project. Admittedly, after more than 50 years a sudden request to remember that long ago was a difficult task. So the information about what Castro recommended as a "prominent example" of the Colombian development is still to be discovered from the written documents.

Figure 127. Few architectural projects selected as representative of Colombian modernity between 1945-1955 © HITCHCOCK

According to the MoMA press release of November 23rd, 1955, (Art] 1955) in a preliminary survey 10 countries were visited – México, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panamá, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina. I have not found much information about the visit architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1903-1987) made with photographer Rosalie Thorn (Rollie) McKenna (1918-2003) to Bogotá and Medellín.

There is a gap between Hitchcock's initial appraisals in 1954 when he noted "of course I was already aware that Mexico, Brazil, and after them Colombia and

²⁵⁴ In (del Real 2012) there is a reference of "Data on Personalities in Latin American Countries Prepared for the Use of Henry-Russell Hitchcock and R. Thorne McKenna," n/d, unpaginated. CE, II.1. 69(1) 3/5. MoMA Archives, NY.

²⁵⁵ Dicken Castro (1922) is an architect with a prolific career in graphic design. Received the life and legacy award of the Ministry of Culture in 2012

Venezuela have the best stuff" (Hitchcock 1954b) and what was published in the survey on Latin American architecture 1945-1955, (Hitchcock 1955) in which Colombia is misrepresented with bizarre and minimal reference to projects that are clearly not relevant or outstanding objects by any means. In the text there is no visible explanation for this dramatic change. Perhaps the emerging architecture found did not meet expectations, but the examples shown in this research are clearly more valuable than the pieces to which the country was reduced. Further exploration on the rationale of this gap might shed some light on the agency of the reaction to the international political perception – and friendliness – in cultural exchange activities, as opinion-makers. So far, quality does not necessarily equate with international recognition.

Figure 128. Most Colombian modern architecture has fallen outside records despite its architectural values, Cali Countryside Club, 1955 © CARANGO

▪ **Memory shaping**

According with soft power strategies, the fugacity of the information, access, and the simultaneity of different undergoing projects made it difficult to retain data. It helped in restraining the capacity of retention, and helped to expedite neglect. Which in turn corresponds with Adrian Forty's idea that "forgetting is the decay of imprint". (Forty et al. 2001) I argue therefore, that the strategies of the dictatorship with regard to the meditation of projects of the National Plan of Public Works were oriented to shape processes of remembering and forgetting.

The saturation of highly mediated information, and multiplicity of projects that were filling the political discourse and the media, did not allow their fixation in people's memory. The dynamic flow of information implied a short retention of it. The urbanization process and the rapid growth of the cities were part of daily life during the mid-twentieth century.

Figure 129. A highly mediated dictatorship shaped the representation of it and its products © DIPE

Architecture and engineering were at the very centre of the modernization, but it fell short of representing a national ideal. The National Plan of Public Works did indeed build all around the country, and contributed to the physical and practical cohesion of the nation. But it did not represent the image of the nation. It would not be possible to cite a specific building as representative of Colombia, neither for ordinary people nor for intellectuals.²⁵⁶ The Plan did not construct a national identity as the dictatorship was claiming.

Fittingly, the DIPE highlighted: "Some newspapers reported 'Colombia feels again like a fatherland'. The fatherland has been re-conquered, and the state has finally come into existence." (Archivo Presidencia (1953-1957: Rojas Pinilla) 1954d, 7) Before the 1950s, the state presence was almost non-existent in some regions and indeed the establishment of these infrastructural projects made the institutions and services provided by the state more visible. But then, here one should trace a difference between what can be conceived as fatherland and nation; terms that were interchangeable in Rojas' discourse when referring to the country. Although the emphasis of the government's policy was the renewal of the idea of nation what was received from the population was the existence of a fatherland. The cultural studies' scholar Mirela-Luminata Murgescu (2002) highlights the importance of the difference between these two terms:

The construction of identities implies necessarily the activation of concepts and affects towards this territory, [...] as Fatherland or Motherland. This territory can overlap with the state where the respective community lives, but may also include regions belonging to other states, or be completely outside the respective state.

And Murgescu (2002) goes on to emphasize: "the nation is a community of people who feel united through the same customs or through a certain way of thinking and who have the sentiment that they form a group different to others". In accord with

²⁵⁶ In the case of Brazil o México the government programs embrace a specific image as representative of their nationhood, and it has remained as reference of their identity.

this, Diane Curtin has pointed out that in Latin America,²⁵⁷ “geographic place no longer provides a strong sense of cultural identity, and conflating national and cultural identities becomes particularly problematic”. (Curtin et al. 2007) That social mind-frame as nation remained only in the regime’s discourse, but did not transcend to the population.

The mediation of the built environment helped therefore to construct a territorial awareness of the extended and diverse Colombia. In a decidedly established tradition to focus only on the capital city, having a plan that appealed to emphasize in a national territory is allegedly a positive turn. Yet the mediation of the built projects making an emphasis in the territory minimised the local and immediate impact of the buildings. Drawing on the strategy of the Rojas regime, individual buildings were meant to be overlooked.

7.5. Required emancipation

Unravelling the complexity of Latin American modernism and nation-building in modern times, Jorge Larrain (1996) has pointed out how Latin American modernity is not entirely imposed, nor mutely adopted, but has a hybrid character, which brings us back to Garcia Canclini. This also implies a two-way process of negotiating and dealing with what has been explicit and what has remained untold.

Figure 130. Revision of common interpretations: alternative view of the ENAP dormitories 2010 © MPSB

The interpretation of the modern process in Latin America derives basically from the tension between modernity and modernization.²⁵⁸ It essentially addresses the

²⁵⁷ This geographer takes as case study Ecuador, but points out similar characteristics in the Latin American region that shares a common colonial history under the Spanish rule.

²⁵⁸ In Latin America it has been an extended space of debate, and has copious literature. The debate range having prominent names not only of cultural studies, but from cultural disciplines, such as literature. Such is the case of Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes, amongst others.

complexity and multiplicity of the phenomena – in particular the incongruence between the rhetorical discourse and practice. This leads to questions about the ambivalence of the modern project, and the reception of it, as a simulacrum – what Octavio Paz has identified as “pseudo-modernity”, as seen in Chapter 1.

The infrastructural legacy of the Rojas dictatorship has been a case of both top-down and bottom-up processes. Ranciere exhorts thus it deserves urgent attention:

It calls for spectators who are active as interpreters, who try to invent their own translation in order to appropriate the story for themselves and make their own story out of it. An emancipated community is in fact a community of storytellers and translators.
(Ranciere 2009)

The architecture of the mid-twentieth century in Colombia is a “surviving witness” of a complex and contradictory period that still has to be entirely discovered. This architecture still constitutes an important part of Colombian cities, and the emerging scholarship has a role to play in the activation of the absence; rational inquiry about what happened at that time and its materialization will constitute our emancipation.

Conclusion

8. Conclusion: Double-truth practices

To date, the state architecture built during Rojas Pinilla's dictatorship has been largely overlooked; this thesis has identified it and provided an interpretation of what happened. My research has enquired into the rationale behind the transformation of the built environment during the regime, and its consequences in architectural history and culture. It has investigated the strategies in use in the context of the Cold War, tracing relations based on the representation of pre-eminent projects, and questioning the historical interpretation given to them.

Drawn from the historical evidence, the conclusion of this investigation is that the political mediation and instrumentalization of architecture have conditioned not only the creation and materialization of the built environment, but also its reception and interpretation. Colombian state architecture created during the mid-twentieth century responded to what Caillois (1984) identified as a double-truth strategy, that has deeply shaped not only the architecture itself, but also the way it has been treated in architectural history and contemporary debates about heritage.

This research has addressed the architecture as a materialization of the political project of a modern state in Latin America that, in responding to the complex dynamics during the Cold War. During this period two important trends simultaneously shaped the development of the region. One that has been widely recognized related to the implementation of social services and facilities of the modern life. And the second one, that operated in a less visible manner, that is, the concern with the defence of the hemisphere. By increasing awareness about the strategies in use within the mediation of these state projects, this thesis has set out to foster the acknowledgement of what was deliberately created in order to be forgotten. In doing so, this research challenges common assumptions about the lack of value of modern Colombian architecture from this period, and ultimately calls for a re-evaluation of these projects, which, as Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1954c) initially suggested, deserve better consideration.

8.1. Neglected (but still present) history

This research has combined international sources and a methodological approach with specific historical knowledge about Colombia. It has been mainly driven by questions that emerged from the *lack* of available information in the current historiography; a lack which contradicted the popular reference in the most distant regions that attributes part of the existing infrastructure to the dictatorship. Over the course of my research, it became apparent that the archival information that I uncovered was likely to remain contradictory and incomplete. The official records this research took as its primary source were highly cryptic, deliberately muddled, and yet sensitive; but they were necessarily the initial point from which to reconstruct a history of a neglected period. This realization required that I rethink the strategy by which I was approaching my subject. If I wanted to understand these architectural projects in relation to each other, then I needed to better understand the general context in which they were built and to analyse the rationale for the programme, the National Plan of Public Works, of which they were part. And that frame of reference necessarily was neither restricted to national archives, nor to the four years of the regime. Awareness about the national and international context has made more comprehensible the paradoxes of this space production.

While recognizing the important contribution made by the current historiography, there is still little information about what happened at the turning point of the development of the built environment in Colombia. Therefore the proposed challenge was to reconcile the inconsistency between scholarship and the built environment. My academic experience and my own political position made me very sceptical. I assumed a distance from the regime, and positioned myself as an outsider, as I did not have direct experience of the dictatorship, but only of its built legacy.

This research has made a concerted effort to find sources of information about an obscure period. This was an enterprise that required meticulous scrutiny of the available historical data, joining many of the dots and filling in the gaps in the cultural and political history relating to Colombian architecture. The information was contradictory and ambivalent, which meant that often before fully trusting it, I attempted to cross-reference it against other sources. Despite considerable effort, it was not always possible to verify the data; in those cases where it was not possible, I have tried

to highlight the contradiction or gap in the hopes that some future studies may be able to shed light on the matter.

Themes such as the Cold War strategies emerged from the data collected, becoming a suitable resource to make sense of the historical registers and voids. The most difficult aspect of this research was trying to identify the guiding logic behind what has continued to be a confusingly ill-defined Plan of infrastructure: the almost excessive amount of (misleading) public information about the Plan stands in stark contrast to the scarcity of internal records. A breakthrough moment occurred when I realized that, rather than some of these areas of confusion simply being the result of poor documentation, they may actually reveal the logic of the Rojas government: that is, the Rojas government may well have been engaged upon a campaign of deliberate obfuscation and manipulation – in other words, camouflage and soft power, masking the full extent of their building activities.

A recurring question has been: why would a dictatorship engage in such a manipulatory strategy? This thesis has presented different possible interpretations given the sensitive geographical, social and political conditions of Colombia at the time, and the particularities of a populist regime. I would summarize them in three main intersecting explanations for the paradoxes of such a double-truth enterprise. First, by specifically addressing vulnerable social sectors, the National Plan of Public Works aimed to control the rural conflicts that were then translated by migration to the suburban areas. This ensured not only the efficient provision of materials, and funding through international cooperation, but also rapid construction through standardised processes that eased the incorporation into new living standards of the modern world. It thereby controlled urban expansion. Secondly, such infrastructure also ensured a state presence in vulnerable sectors and regions that until then were mostly unexplored, i.e. rural areas with precedents of violence, which were more responsive to the expansive communist discourses that were rapidly being disseminated. The considerable number of civic buildings, thus, not only allowed some of them to act as a smoke screen in the construction of purely defence installations, but also occupied strategic sites to support the democratic discourse with buildings that provided modern services and support networks, of either shelter or mobility, as is the case of the network of airports. That is, it ensured territorial awareness. Thirdly, the military regime permanently tried to reduce the ever-growing political resistance and legitimize its

government by gaining favouritism from popular sectors through the creation of social services and facilities. In the creation of Rojas' political capital, the benevolence of services provided was a more effective proposition than was strategic control of the population.

The use of alternative sources of evidence has been a challenging endeavour, but it has proved fruitful to address the sensitivity of the information and the context. The material gathered from official sources mainly in Colombia and the United States has offered the opportunity of a more complete understanding of architectural objects that have to date remained disregarded in architectural culture.

Based on the conceptualization of space and power, the thesis has provided an enquiry into the discourses and strategies of the time. I have investigated the creation, representation, and interpretation of modernist projects in Colombia, on different scales: national (network of airports), regional (Boyacá), urban (Bogotá), and architectural (ENAP). This multiscalar approach allowed me also to question the space produced by the state in the mid-twentieth century, and how it has been experienced and registered.

Approaching such a sensitive subject as a dictatorship proved to be more difficult than initially imagined. I had to be extremely cautious about still active animosities against or in favour of the regime, and had to be particularly careful to emphasize that this research is a critical assessment of the infrastructural plan, and neither a blind celebration of, nor an attempt to annihilate, the regime and its politics and built projects. This thesis does not advocate for totalitarian regimes; it is a call for, and contribution to, the informed analysis of the produced space.

8.2. Learning from a disregarded construction

The Naval College reflects what occurred on a larger scale with the National Plan of Public Works. Even though the modernization of the country did not begin with Rojas, the regime's explicit interest in projecting a modern image boosted the consolidation of modernist architecture through standardization of processes, the structuring of suburban and rural areas, the use of industrialized materials, the

language of abstraction, pure forms, and updated functions. Modern architecture was built in Colombia through numerous ordinary and small projects disseminated in new territories. These facilities enabled and represented improved living standards at a time that appeared to warrant state presence and control. But then, as has been shown, they became highly stigmatized, and neglected in architectural culture.

The evidence suggests that the regime's transformation of the built environment was deliberately meant to be discrete. Not only were the facilities low-profile constructions, but also the state information about the projects was also misleading, or fragmented. The way in which information was manipulated is consistent with known soft power tactics. (Nye 2004) Publically, however, the representation of these projects was highly mediated, and thus they were portrayed as urgent and necessary projects of development. There was no mention made of national security or international defence aspects, which we now know were part of the complete picture.

Although I found no explicit advice or guidelines about industrial camouflage specifically for those building in Latin America or Colombia, from the data collected about the Rojas National Plan of Public Works it seemed likely that camouflage had been deployed at some level. Historically, Colombia has been keener to observe and take as a reference what happens in the United States and Europe than in the rest of Latin America. In terms of the materialization itself, the physical characteristics of infrastructural projects co-relate to mostly US manuals of industrial camouflage, (Wittmann et al. 1942) showing similar patterns in terms of the location, image, and forms. And even if there was no explicit manual on camouflage for Latin American architects, this was not necessary for the diffusion of these principles, given that most architects operating in Colombia were educated in America or Europe or worked with consultants who had been. I have explained in the thesis how this operated both on the urban and architectural levels.²⁵⁹ The relevant point about camouflage and soft power strategies, however, is that they distort buildings or make them resemble something different from, or simpler than, what they really are, and this was a pattern I found repeated over and over again in the products of the National Plan of Public Works.

Indeed, it is hard not to conclude that these state projects were intended to be overlooked. The proliferation of non-iconic projects was suitable in order to avoid resistance with buildings that projected an image of openness, to embed posts of territorial control through numerous small-scale buildings, and later to build political capital upon addressing the most troubled sectors. The regime sought to consolidate its control both through the welfare provision of social services and the warfare system of defence construction, the latter perhaps much more possible given the military regime. Development programmes provided an appropriate scenario for the experimentation and accomplishment of multiple agendas. Invisibility thus suited the regime's ends.

Colombia subscribed to the US idea: "development equals security". From the beginning of the twentieth century, Colombia received cooperation from Germany, the United Kingdom and France, but after the Second World War the United States became the main foreign influence in Latin America and in particular in Colombia. It was an open door to the US *backyard* within the larger frame of the mutual security act. In the early years of the Cold War, the influence of the United States and multilateral organisms was strengthened. The cooperation took different forms, but it mainly involved know-how, resources, and qualified labour. To date, that influence has not been fully comprehended, particularly not in relation to the built environment.

This cultural analysis of the interaction between architecture and power questions the mediation of architecture through the strategies in use during the Cold War. It draws on Lefebvre's idea of the simultaneous and dialectical construction of the society and the built environment; a conditioner and product; a medium and representation; production and interpretation. (1991) As a result, I found that the rationale behind the huge transformation of the built environment was misrepresentation. This architecture was a political instrument that responded to the double-truth idea. (Caillois et al. 1984) That is to say, the National Plan of Public Works simultaneously promoted welfare, providing modern facilities, and warfare, creating a state presence and posts of national and international control. State architecture embodied tactics and strategies creating a deliberate self-effacement of thousands of infrastructural projects: as functional, non-iconic objects, they were meant to seem everyday and non-threatening, non-political and non-ideological. Certainly, the majority of them were completely opposite to the grandiose expressions of state power that we

see at the time in other Latin American countries, the example par excellence being Brasilia.

It has been my contention that these strategies shaped the public reception and interpretation of the architecture, and has since had both cultural and material consequences. A lack of understanding about these facilities and their association with the regime has continued until now, and from this has emerged a conflictive relation with these buildings. Despite the fact that, as has been demonstrated, these infrastructural projects were not necessarily innocent, they provided facilities that have become part of the habitus, being therefore normalized and overlooked.

This self-effacement has been reinforced by the canon of architectural history, which has ignored and disregarded potentially valuable projects of modernist architecture. More notoriously still, it has omitted projects that were initially identified as architecturally valuable, as is the case of the Naval College. The neglect of state architecture of the 1950s in turn has made even more operative the set-up of framed memories about these projects. I found that silence as resistance to the architectural history had counter-productive results. Silence about these projects does not mean forgetting, on the contrary it reinforces the resistance to them. It has led to the jeopardizing of modernism as language that also produced objects worthy of reconsideration.

What remains unknown? What has been untold in this history? Both what has become known through this thesis, and what still remains unknown, suggest that this topic may well prove to be a fruitful terrain for academic research for years to come. At the very least, this research has demonstrated that the dictatorship's architectural and infrastructural projects were significant, singly and as a totality, and should no longer be excluded from architectural history.

8.3. Discussing the created invisibility

My thesis contributes to architectural culture by providing an understanding of the production of the built environment within complex dynamics and, in so doing, it raises significant questions about what has been included in or excluded from the

history of modern Colombian architecture. The context of the Cold War offers a different perspective about a turning point in the urbanization process, and the adoption of a modern image; that is to say, it identifies the years of the Rojas dictatorship as crucial to this process, in contrast with what has been either said in the past or left unspoken. Fundamentally, it problematizes the mediation and instrumentalization of architecture that, despite being an overlooked and unloved legacy, is still valuable and representative of a global historical and cultural phenomenon.

Perhaps the most palpable contribution of this research is revealing original and unknown material, and its interpretation. It has built a foundation of data and identified relevant sources of information, most of which have recently become more accessible as restrictions on them have been eased. In the first place, this thesis has contributed to filling a gap in national history, calling attention to the possible value of state architectural projects of the 1950s, and contesting the established canon about Colombian modern architecture. But the thesis' analysis provides further outcomes.

Acknowledging that the dictatorship was a difficult political period, this research nonetheless supports the idea that it marked a decisive change in the development of the built environment. However, the absurdities and excesses of the regime overshadowed the historical impact on the space production. State projects of the time have not to date been documented or explained. They have remained overlooked, and in some cases downplayed, being associated simply with their use as facilities – and still highly politicized. The study of them as architectural objects, i.e. their architectural qualities and their historical significance, has been neglected, even though the task has become more urgent in recent years as some projects of that time are in jeopardy. A critical understanding of them constitutes an opportunity for an informed and balanced assessment of their cultural significance and architectural value.

Situating modern Colombian architecture in an international context not only provides a new understanding of the architectural and urban development, but also contributes to its visibility as part of a wider strategy, that could potentially be traced in other countries. This thesis can be allied with the growing critical interest in alternative

modernities,²⁶⁰ that is, modernism that does not necessarily develop the same way that it did in Europe and the United States or, indeed, in other Latin American countries. This differentiated form of modernism was the outcome of the dialectics between the politics and architecture of Latin America in the 1950s. The enthusiastic construction of newly built environments and societies presents a valuable case study that is different to the most well-known references, finding spaces where it was conversant with what had occurred in a global context.

This contribution to architectural and cultural history sheds light on an obscure period in Colombian history and provides an interpretation of the phenomenon by tracing relations of projects so far ignored. Considering political, economic, and social aspects that conditioned the built environment, I have traced the relationships with the politics and strategies of the time. Indeed, this is the first explicit study of architectural projects related to the Cold War in Latin America. The evidence found suggests that multiple agendas were being materialized in architectural or urban objects, which in turn raise awareness about the multiple representations, or even mis-representations, that may be conveyed by architecture.

Analysis of the architecture as political instrument questions to what extent such connotations act against the value and significance of the architectural object. This can be considered an ethical, or even a psychological, concern, but mostly it is a cultural issue. My contention here is that neglecting the existence of the multiple agendas conveyed by architecture results in the built environment being affected more negatively.

8.4. Following steps

The growing interest in discovering and analyzing other architectures in Latin America during the time I have been working on this research has been stimulating, as it tells of the importance of and need for this research. Emerging discussions and

²⁶⁰ The scholar debate about alternative, differential or multiple modernities is a necessary reference in relation to Latin America in order to discuss the non-monolithic phenomenon. C.f. (Rabaté 2013), (García Canclini et al. 2005), (Eisenstadt 2002), (Gaonkar 2001), (Rabaté 1996).

thought-provoking scholarly studies have been opportunities to air different rationales for why the built environment in this region during the mid-twentieth century was shaped as it was.

However, this research is only a first step in laying the foundation for future work. The more we know about the subject, the more valuable areas of enquiry appear. For instance, two immediate themes are already apparent. First, there is a pressing need to investigate the specific details of the involvement of US agencies and companies in Colombia. This requires more archival material from different sources, but potentially the study of projects developed by SOM and MoMA in Colombia will be highly illustrative for reaching a deeper understanding of the extent and nature of technical and cultural cooperation. Secondly, in studies about camouflage, the role of the observer has been overlooked and this is something that could be fruitfully addressed in future work. An analysis of how this external position has been maintained over time, affecting the interpretation and reception of architecture, would provide more elements for discussing material culture.

The paper presented at the annual conference of the Society of Architectural Historians in 2012 brought the opportunity to find some parallels with other countries in South America, especially Paraguay, Cuba, and Venezuela, that will be worth exploring. The Colombian scenario of vulnerability and rapid change during the Cold War was similar to theirs. A comparative study addressing the specificity of each country would necessarily require collaborative and interdisciplinary research. Two main areas of enquiry could be identified here: on the one hand, foreign interactions with other governments; and, on the other, the more informal and immediate outcomes of migratory patterns.

Meanwhile it is widely recognized that the dominant political agenda in Latin America during the Cold War was an open resistance to the communist influence. The relation and impact of US foreign policies and cooperation exchanges were presented as support for the development of the region. Nevertheless, the United States was not the only government actively involved in the region. For instance, it would be worth to enquire the involvement on the built environment production and cultural projects of the emerging socialist movements in the region that were supported by the former Soviet Union, and other governments, trying to counter-balance the US influence. (Wiarda et al. 2007) Therefore, a comparative analysis of other international relations and foreign

interactions could potentially provide a more complete understanding of the highly supported trends of development of the built environment in Latin America.

And perhaps of a wider interest, there is another topic that can be approached making use of the advances reached here. Numerous immigrants, mainly Europeans, arrived in Latin America during the two World Wars and the early years of the Cold War.²⁶¹ From a rapid survey it is clear that they played a key role in both the educational system and practice of architecture in their receiving countries. In the light of network theories, this could be another area of enquiry as a phenomenon of currents of thought and flows of information.

These questions are also relevant in the continuation of a cultural analysis of the Colombian case. The relationships with other governments and the crucial role played by migrants – in particular German, Italian, and Spanish immigrants – will shed light on the exchanges that significantly shaped modern development in the country. The opportunity to pursue this research in a more global context has shown the relevance of understanding Colombian architecture not as an isolated case, but as part of a wider phenomenon. It is my intention to continue working on tracing the architectural history of these international connections.

8.5. Rethinking the modern legacy

Admittedly, the study of the Colombian Naval College and the National Plan of Public Works is necessarily specific, but through these projects I have discussed a wider scenario about the exterior factors, actions, and processes that intervene in the production of space. For all its specific insights, my study is relevant more broadly, in that it demonstrates how architecture can be mediated by multiple agendas and suggests that, in the Cold War, these multiple agendas were often embedded in modern forms. Those multiple ambitions, and expressions were widely disseminated

²⁶¹ The Colombian record for the Committee for International Coordination of National Research in Demography (Asociación Colombiana para el estudio de la población -ACEP 1974) reports that according to data of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) – now OIM – between 1952 and 1974, 7,904 Europeans migrated to Colombia, most of them professional and technicians with their families.

given the implementation of similar politics of development and modernization at a time of greater expansion of multinational interactions.

Cultural and historical impacts (negative and positive) of the instrumentalization of the built environment – which has been commonly represented as the ultimate embodiment of novelty and abstraction – should be understood and critically discussed. Architectural culture needs to learn from them, from their complexity and, by doing so, to draw a distinction between the rejection of the political period that produced it and the denigration of any potential value or historical and social interest of the architectural object itself. Systematic biases weaken architectural history.

Cold War realities and representations in development programs, at least in Latin America, are a double-edged sword, as that mediation ends up distorting the results. Awareness about the consequences of high mediation in turn questions simplistic interpretations of the architectural object as artefact, where there is no consideration of the multiplicity it can embody, or even its mis-representation.

This research has addressed architecture as a material representation of power, including the hidden practices and nature of that power. This instrumentalization is not necessarily explicit; thus it conveys multiple meanings, which have cultural implications on the conflictive relation that people develop with the artefact. This presents a difficulty for the interpretation of cultural meaning, the construction of identity, valuation as worth, and the construction of a sense of belonging. Yet the reality is that Colombia is not an isolated case. Questioning aspects of the production of its built environment under Rojas allows us to develop a more nuanced understanding of the differentiated modernist architecture of the mid-twentieth century.

Figures

Figures

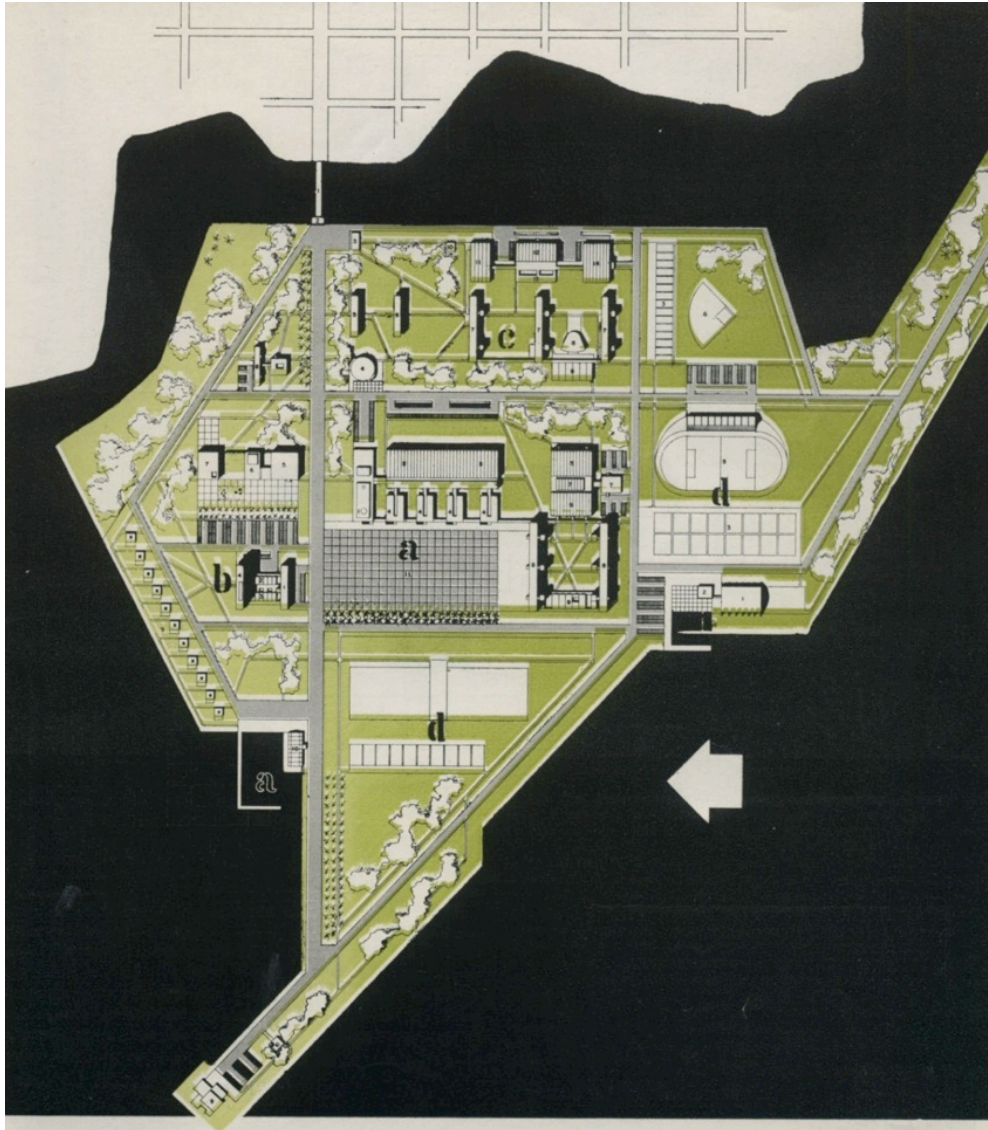


Figure 1. ENAP general plan: prized state project during the regime, published in 1955 © Proa 91

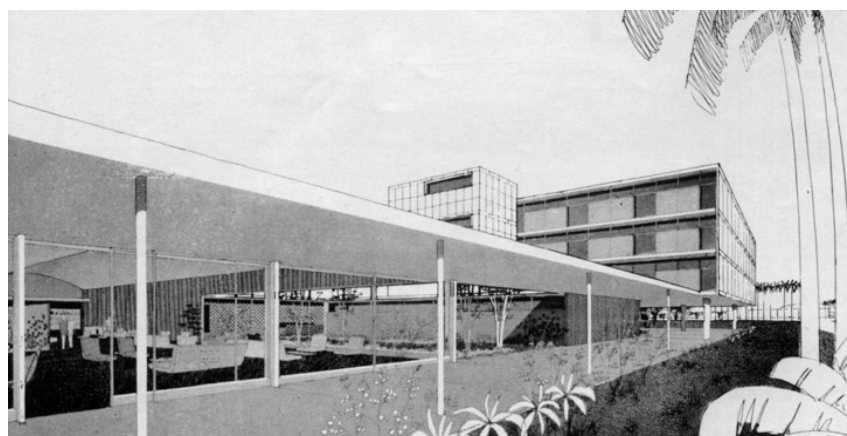


Figure 2. Naval College designed by Obregon & Valenzuela, 1955-1961: representative project of modern architecture promoted by the state © ENAP

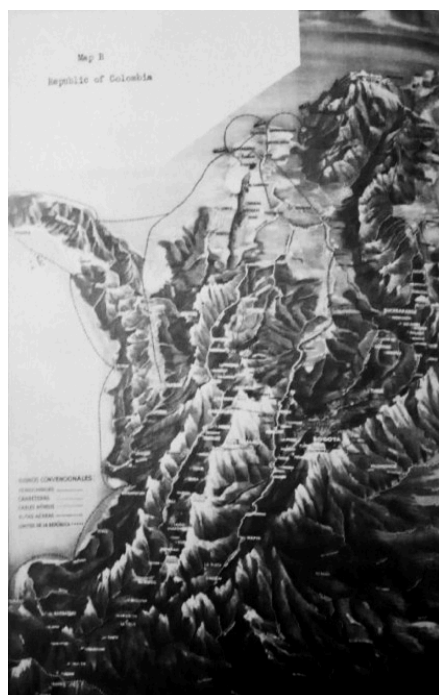


Figure 3. Colombia seen by the Institute of Inter-American Affairs: a fragment of the country, and dramatic geographical conditions © RAC

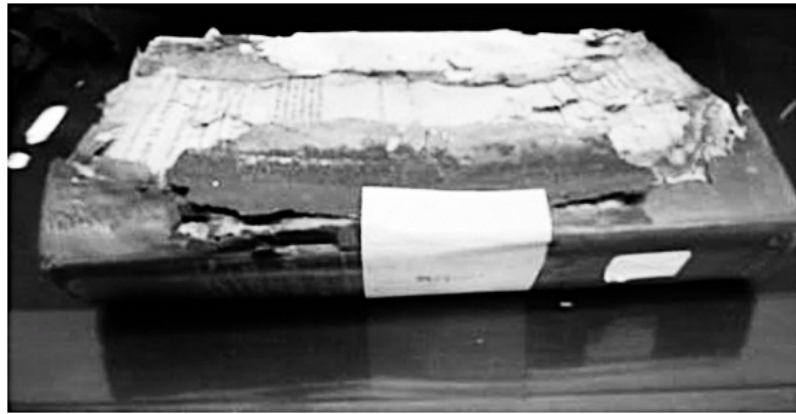


Figure 4. Archival material of the Rojas presidency 1953-1957 without preservation © AGN



Figure 5. Naval College Location in Cartagena © IGAC (modified)

1. Setting the context



Figure 6. Common images of the mid-twentieth century: inauguration Luis Angel Arango Library, 1958 © BLAA



Figure 7. Prominent figures who took part on Pan-American cultural exchanges organized by the ICA © RAC

INFORMATION
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 INCOMING TELEGRAM

FEM-K-M
 No paraphrase necessary.

8963
 Moscow via War
 Dated February 22, 1946
 Rec'd 3:52 p.m.

ACTION:EUR
 INFO: ~~SECRET~~
 S
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 SA
 SPA
 UNO
 EUR/X
 DC/R

Secretary of State,
 Washington.

511, February 22, 9 p.m.

Answer to Dept's 284, Feb 3 involves questions so intricate, so delicate, so strange to our form of thought, and so important to analysis of our international environment that I cannot compress answers into single brief message without yielding to what I feel would be dangerous degree of over-simplification. I hope, therefore, Dept will bear with me if I submit in answer to this question five parts, subjects of which will be roughly as follows:

- (One) Basic features of post-war Soviet outlook.
- (Two) Background of this outlook.
- (Three) Its projection in practical policy on official level.
- (Four) Its projection on unofficial level.
- (Five) Practical deductions from standpoint of US policy.

B. W. L.

Figure 8. Telegram, George Kennan to George Marshall ["Long Telegram"], February 22, 1946 © NARA



Figure 9. Latin America as a backyard: "Civilization, the last chance" by Herblock, originally published in 1939 ©LOC/Herblock Foundation

Country	Period	Years in power
Argentina	1943 -46	3
Venezuela	1952 - 58	6
Colombia	1953 - 57	4
Paraguay	1954 - 93	39
Bolivia	1964 - 82	18
Brazil	1964 - 85	21
Peru	1968 - 80	12
Ecuador	1972 - 79	7
Uruguay	1973 - 85	12
Chile	1973 - 90	17
Argentina	1976 - 83	7
Surinam	1980 - 87	7

Figure 10. Dictatorships in Latin America during the Cold War. © MPSB based on Bethell



Figure 11. Colombian territory in the world © World Geographic Maps (modified)

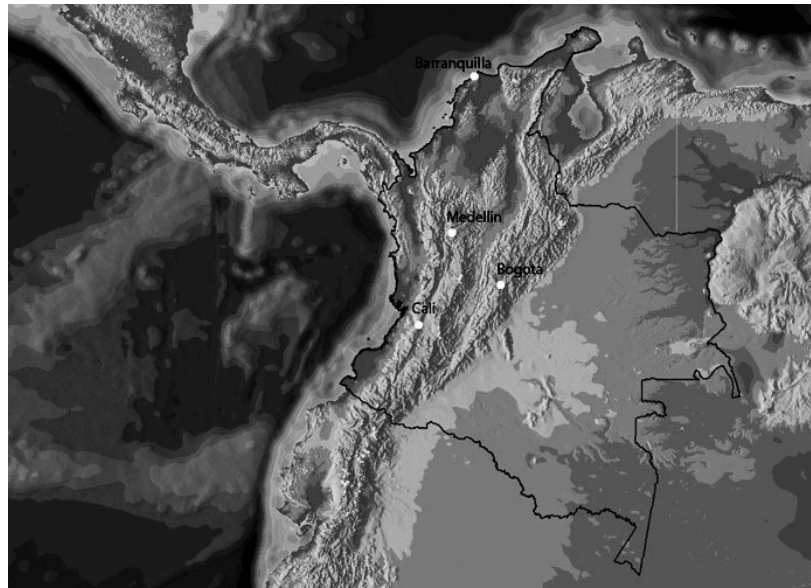


Figure 12. Traditional urban areas, cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants by 1930s © Mapsof.net (modified)



Figure 13. Rojas' speech on taking power speech, June 13th, 1953 © El Tiempo



Figure 14. Image of public manifestations of support for the regime alongside undergoing "works of progress", 1953 © DIPE



Figure 15. National broadcasting of presidential speeches ensuring wider audiences with the use of modern media © BLAA

Urban population	AAGR	AAGR	AAGR	AAGR
City	1938	1951	1964	1973
Bogota	3.44	5.52	7.48	4.72
Medellin	3.43	6.84	5.24	3.93
Barranquilla	0.85	5.25	4.08	3.27
Cali	-1.85	7.00	7.62	4.13
Manizales	0.59	2.99	4.44	0.35
Cartagena	-0.85	2.10	6.16	2.88
Ibague	0.87	3.71	3.97	2.74
Pereira	1.80	3.07	5.47	1.70
Cucuta	1.51	3.99	4.81	5.27
Bucaramanga	1.52	5.84	6.03	2.88
Pasto	1.41	3.85	2.58	3.04
Neiva	1.35	3.02	4.53	3.38
Santa Marta	0.72	2.76	6.28	2.35
Popayan	-0.58	3.12	4.21	2.01
Tunja	0.60	2.36	7.35	1.59
Total main cities	1.43	3.36	6.16	3.86

Figure 16. Synthesis of Colombian census data 1930s – 1970s (Average Annual Growth Rate). Based on DANE



Figure 17. Urban extension Cali 1961: almost duplicated area in a decade © OSSO

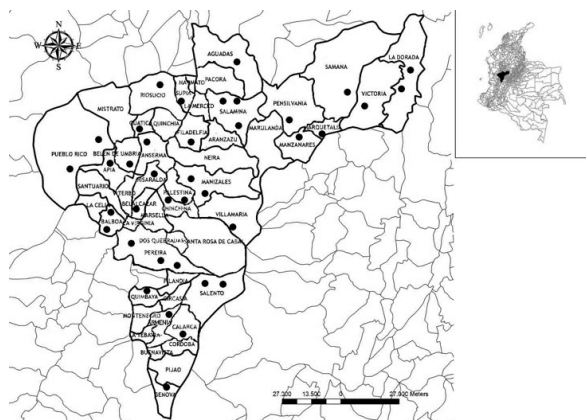


Figure 18. Map of distribution of projects in coffee-growing area © UNC (modified)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ADMINISTRATION
ICA CABLE AND AIRGRAM ADDRESS SHEET FOR CIRCULAR MESSAGES

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
Unclassified

CABLE ROOM: SEND TO FOLLOWING AS:

ICATO CIRCULAR *LA-22*

ICATO CIRCULAR R	ICATO CIRCULAR H	ICATO CIRCULAR L
1 ABIDJAN	1 AMMAN	10 ASUNCION
2 ACCRA	2 ANKARA	3 BELIZE
3 ADDIS ABABA	3 ATHENS	12 BOGOTA
4 BAKING	4 BAGHDAD	6 BUENOS AIRES
5 BELGRADE	5 BEIRUT	5 CARACAS
6 BONN	6 CAIRO	5 GEORGETOWN
7 CONAKRY	7 COLOMBO	9 GUATEMALA
8 DAKAR	8 KABUL	4 KINGSTON
9 FREETOWN	9 KARACHI	10 LA PAZ
10 KHARTOUM	10 KATMANDU	10 LIMA
11 LAGOS	11 NEW DELHI	10 MANAGUA
2 LEOPOLDVILLE	2 NICOSIA	7 MEXICO CITY
3 LGHE	3 TAIPEI	2 MONTEVIDEO
4 LONDON	4 TEHRAN	10 PANAMA CITY
5 MADRID	5 TEL AVIV	5 PARAMARIBO
6 MOGADISCIO		10 PORT AU PRINCE
7 MONROVIA		10 PORT OF SPAIN
8 NAIROBI		12 QUITO
9 PARIS USRO		15 RIO DE JANEIRO
10 RABAT		9 SAN JOSE
11 SALISBURY		8 SAN SALVADOR
12 TANANARIVE		14 SANTIAGO
13 TRIPOLI		12 TEGUCIGALPA
14 TUNIS		
15 VIENNA		
16 YAOUNDE		

ICATO CIRCULAR F

1 BANGKOK
2 DJAKARTA
3 MANILA
4 PHNOM PENH
5 RANGOON
6 SAIGON
7 SEOUL
8 TAIPEI
9 TOKYO
10 YIENTIANE

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
Unclassified

ICA-277 (2-61) PRINTED (2-61)

Figure 19. List by region (Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America) of capital cities of countries taking part in the program, ICA telegram, 1961 © NARA

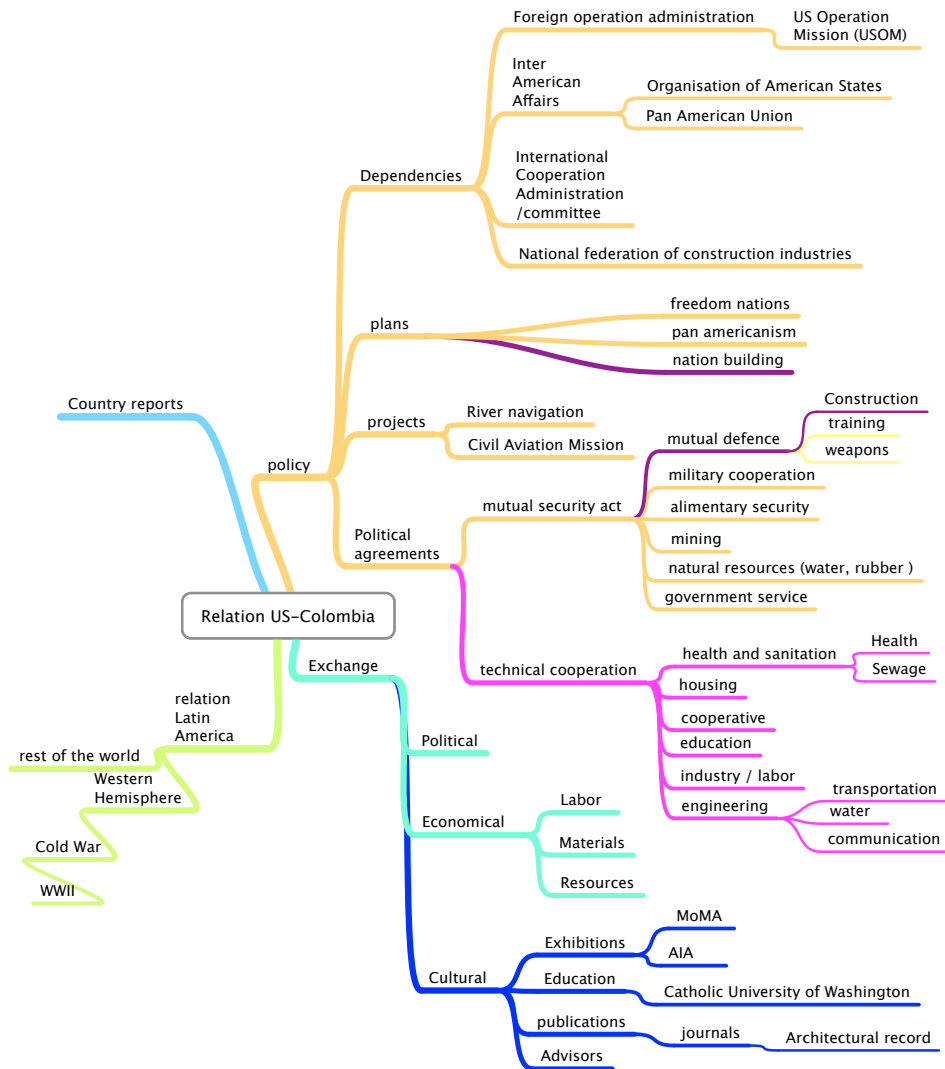


Figure 20. Scheme of the US cooperation system intertwined with security concerns © MPSB



Figure 21. Workshop at Inter-American Housing Centre, part of the cultural and technical exchanges © RAC



Figure 22. Press article encouraging modernization to resemble the United States © Cromos

Data restriction

Figure 23. Le Corbusier pilot plan for Bogotá: mainly focused on the traditional centre, preservation of rivers, and road network © FLC-ADAGP

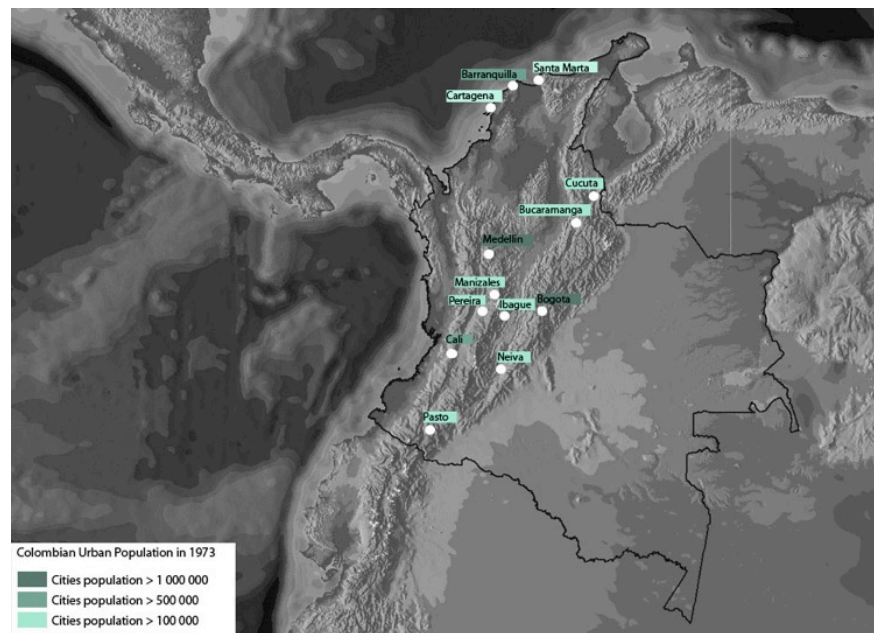


Figure 24. Colombian main cities (more than 100,000 inhabitants) in 1973 © Mapsof.net (modified)

2. Misrepresentation of the political agenda

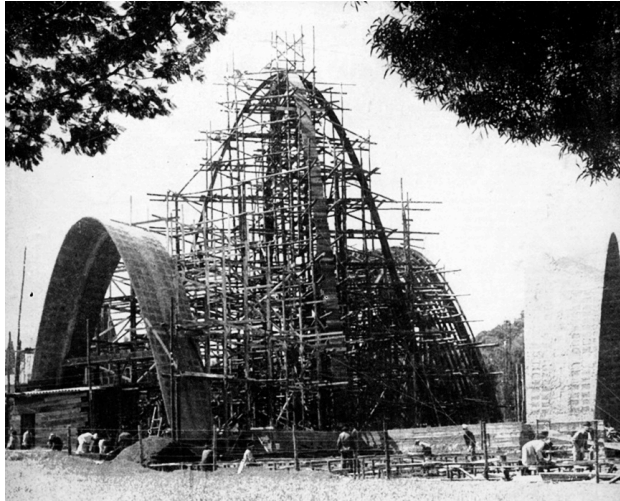


Figure 25. Accelerated construction of architectural and engineering projects:
Chapel Gimnasio Moderno School © Orduz



Figure 26. UNESCO mobile public library, gaining public support through
developing social programmes during the construction of the local library
©RAC

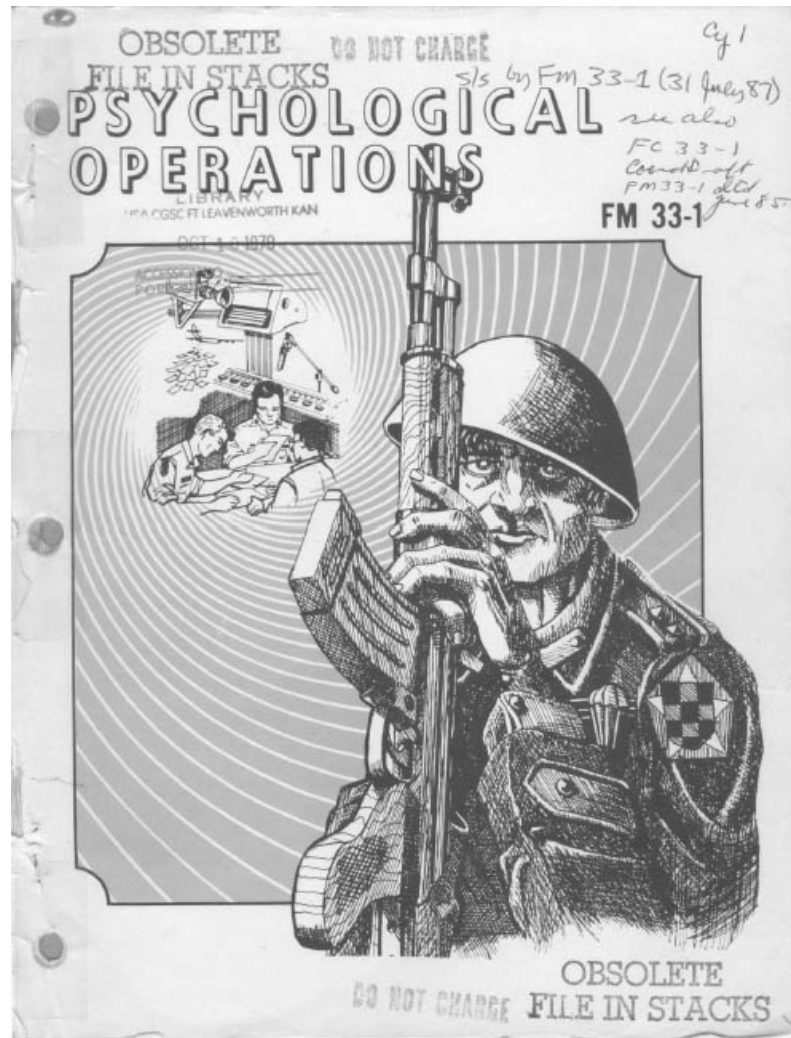


Figure 27. Front page: manual of psychological operations © University of Illinois

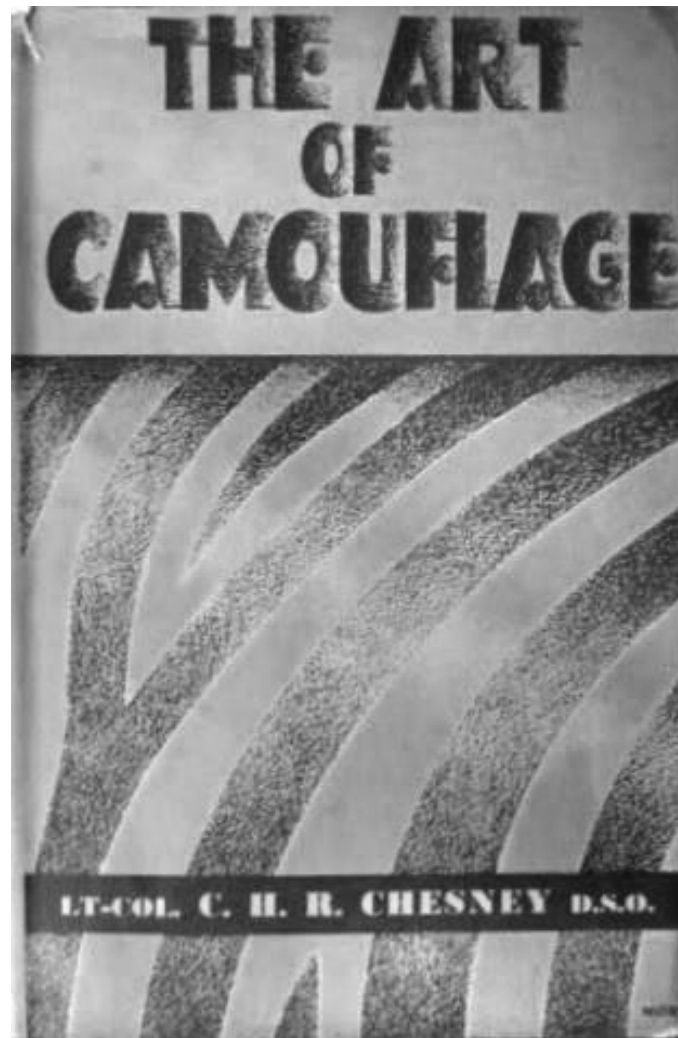


Figure 28. Front page: the Art of Camouflage © BL

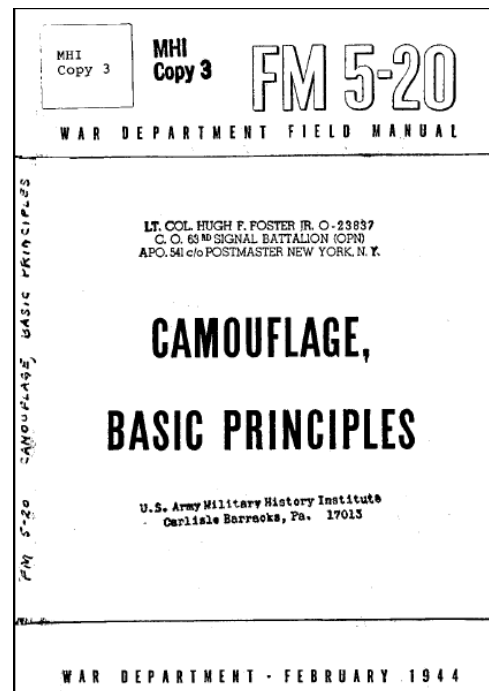


Figure 29. Camouflage, Basic Principles: cover © NARA



Figure 30. The government showcased the achievements on infrastructure through the media, exhibitions, official reports © DIPE

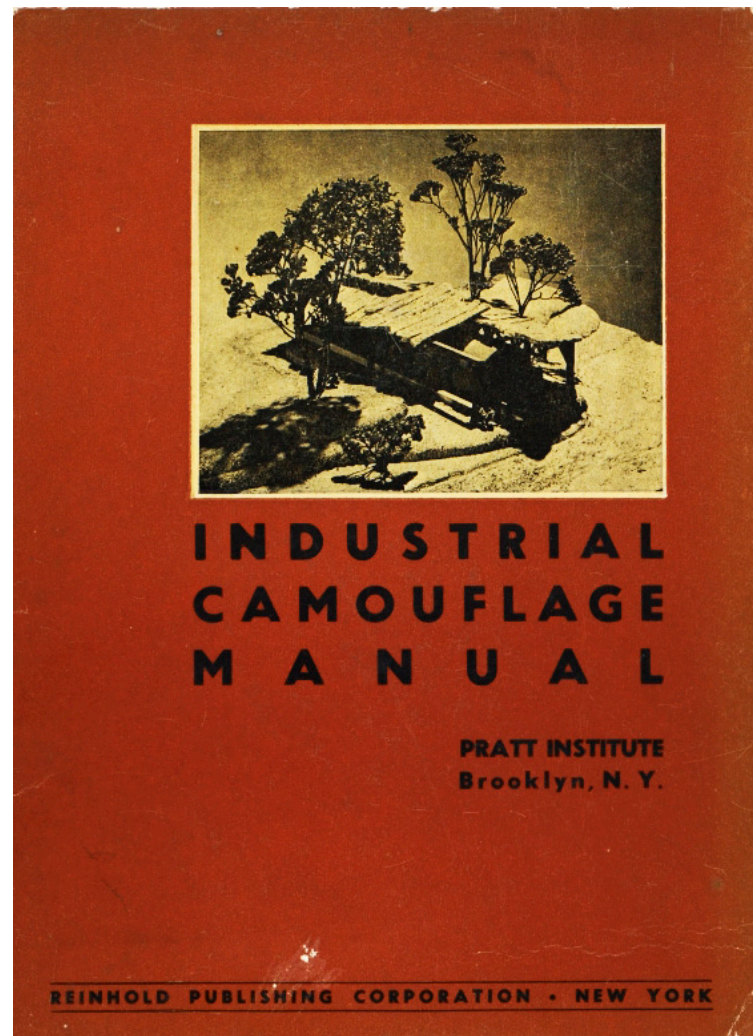


Figure 31. Front page: Camouflage manual of Pratt Institute © TATE

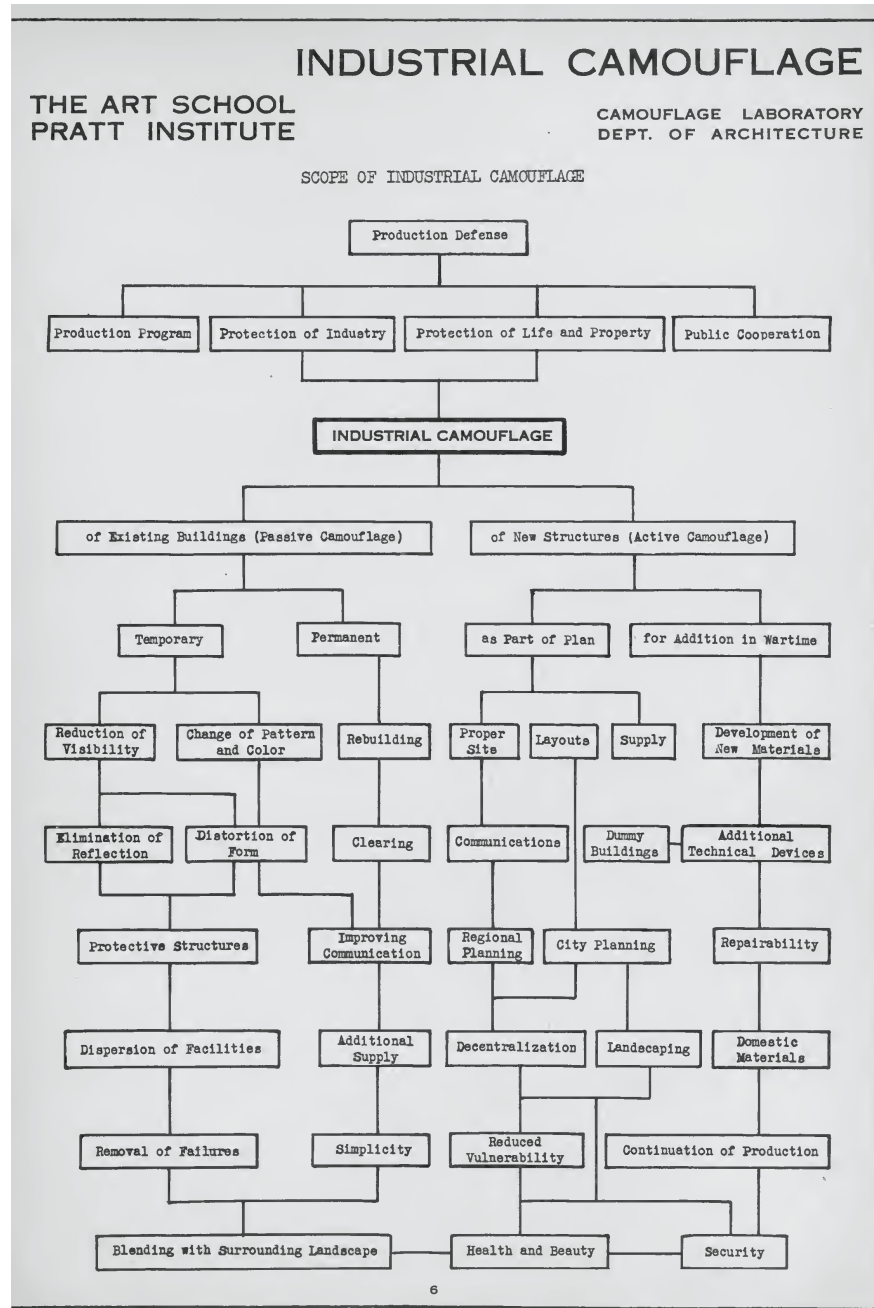


Figure 32. Diagram synthesizing key aspects for existing buildings and new structures: health and aesthetics along with security © Industrial Camouflage Manual



Figure 33. Architectural students were trained through camouflage design problems © Industrial Camouflage Manual

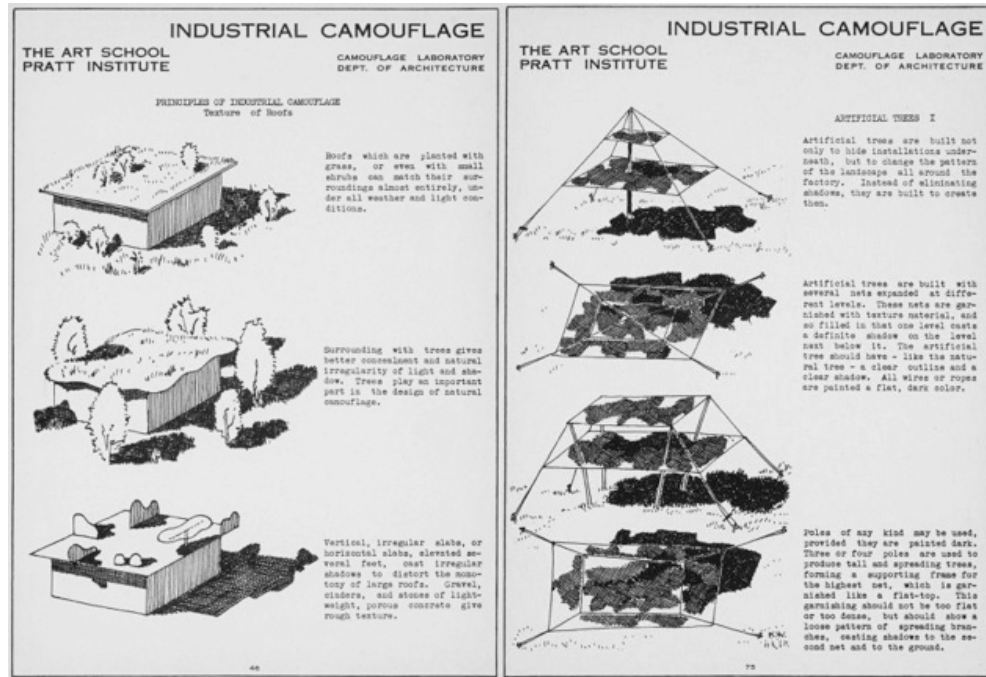


Figure 34. Management of shadows in order to conceal existing or new buildings © Industrial Camouflage Manual

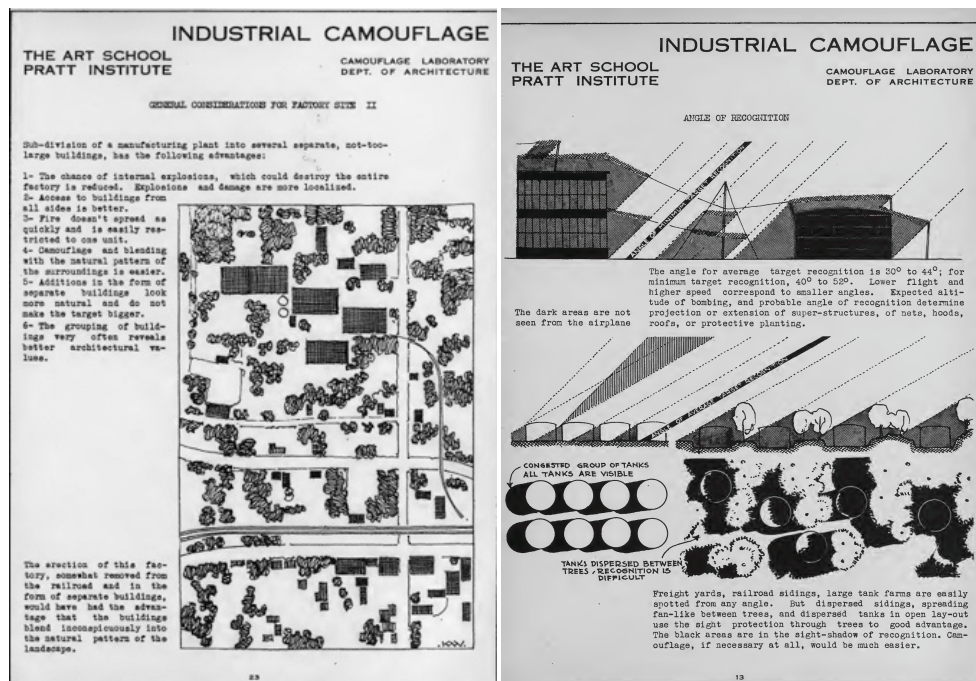


Figure 35. Fragmentation of the built space, different material and form to reduce visibility © Industrial Camouflage Manual

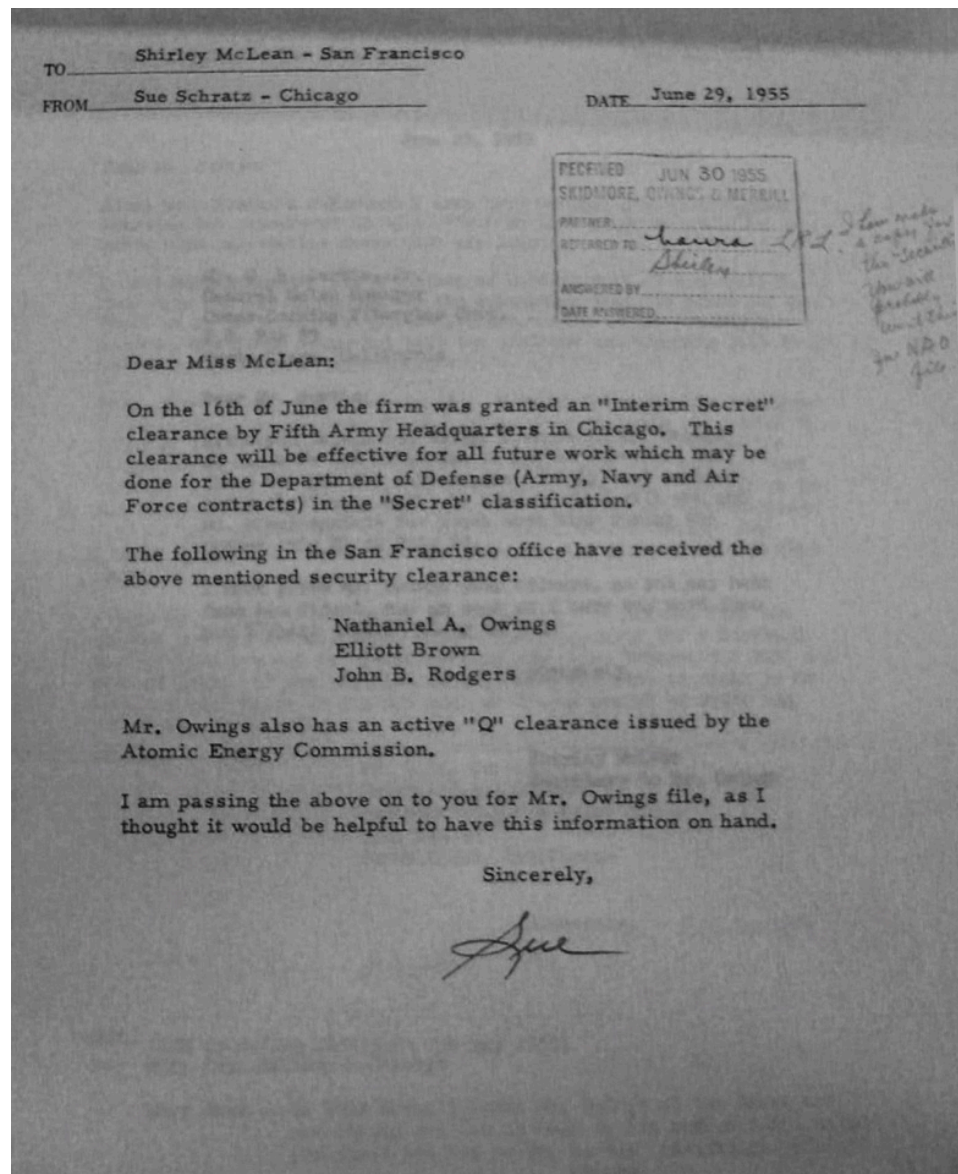


Figure 36. "Interim Secret" clearance to SOM for projects of Defense department and the Atomic commission ©LOC

February 8th, 1952

Mr. Sherley W. Morgan
School of Architecture
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey.

Dear Sherley:

I have just returned from a trip South and find your letter of January 15th.

I have put down April 17th as the day for me to be in Princeton for your Fall Meeting of the Advisory Council, Architectural School.

Ninety percent of our work now is defense work and I will hope I do not get an urgent call from the army to go to some distant spot; I will do my best to avoid this.

Sincerely,

ls;kmk

Figure 37. Letter Skidmore's apology for absence from Princeton University meeting in 1952 for being in the South and "Ninety percent of our work now is defense work" © LOC



Figure 38. CIAM Strategic bombing © ETH Courtesy: Stephen Graham

3. The National Plan of Public Works



Figure 39. Infrastructural projects equated development, international airport in Cali © Proa

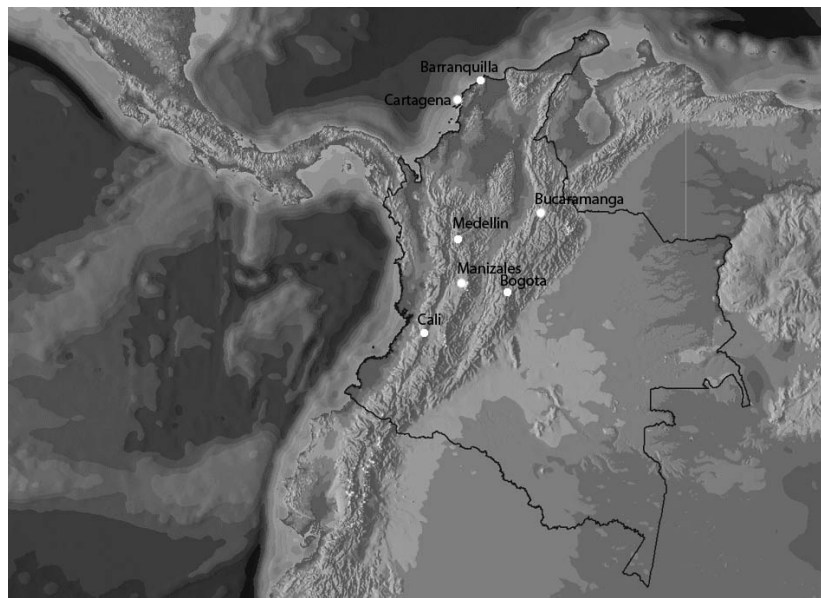


Figure 40. Map of location of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in 1950s, growing number of urban centres in Andean and Caribbean regions © Mapsoft.net (modified)

Data restriction

Figure 41. Members of the Currie Mission in Colombia 1949-1953 © The Political Economy of the World Bank: The Early Years

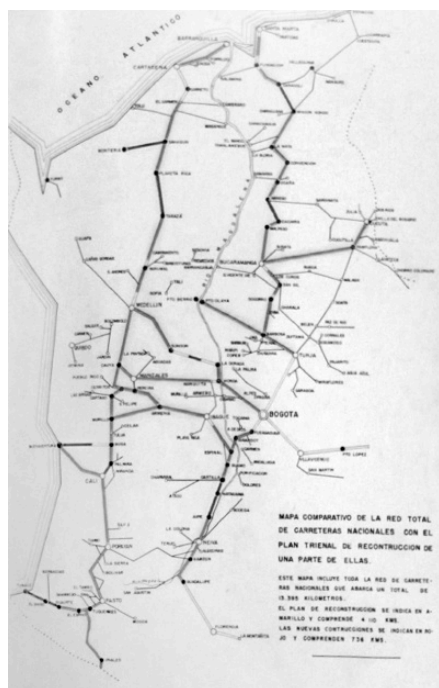


Figure 42. Railways and road network map seeking connectivity across the country, but still concentrated in the Andean region © MOP



Figure 43. Image of voluminous reports of Ministry of Public Works 1953-1958, focused on technical innovations on road and railroad networks © MOP

	Municipal House	Library	School /institute	Hospital / Local practice	Estadium	Sport facilities / public pool	Teatre	low-income housing	Hotels	Comisaries	Penitenciary	Electric plant	Aqueduct	Slaughter house	Church	Airport	Sanitary centre	Bank	Total
Antioquia	5	2	17	11	1	3	3	3	1	5	1	13	8	3	0	0	0	0	76
Atlantico	5	0	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	24
Bolivar	4	0	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	5	1	2	0	0	29
Boyaca	8	0	22	5	0	4	2	1	0	4	0	9	6	1	1	0	0	0	63
Caldas	3	2	9	0	2	3	2	3	0	0	1	3	3	4	0	2	0	0	37
Cauca	3	0	10	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	22
Cordoba	2	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	12
Cundinamarca	6	0	24	10	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	11	13	1	0	0	1	1	76
Choco	3	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	11
Huila	1	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8
Magdalena	0	2	8	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	4	1	0	0	0	25
Narino	1	1	12	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	1	0	26
Norte Santander	2	1	8	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	23
Santander	9	1	6	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	6	7	0	1	0	0	44
Tolima	6	1	13	2	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	5	8	6	0	0	0	0	46
Valle	3	2	17	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	32
San Andres	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Caqueta	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Meta	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Amazonas	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Arauca	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Guajira	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Vaupes	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Vichada	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Total	61	12	176	50	10	27	11	9	2	13	9	67	56	36	6	5	3	1	554

Figure 44. Table figures by type of projects reported as inaugurated in 1954
©MPSB based on data MOP

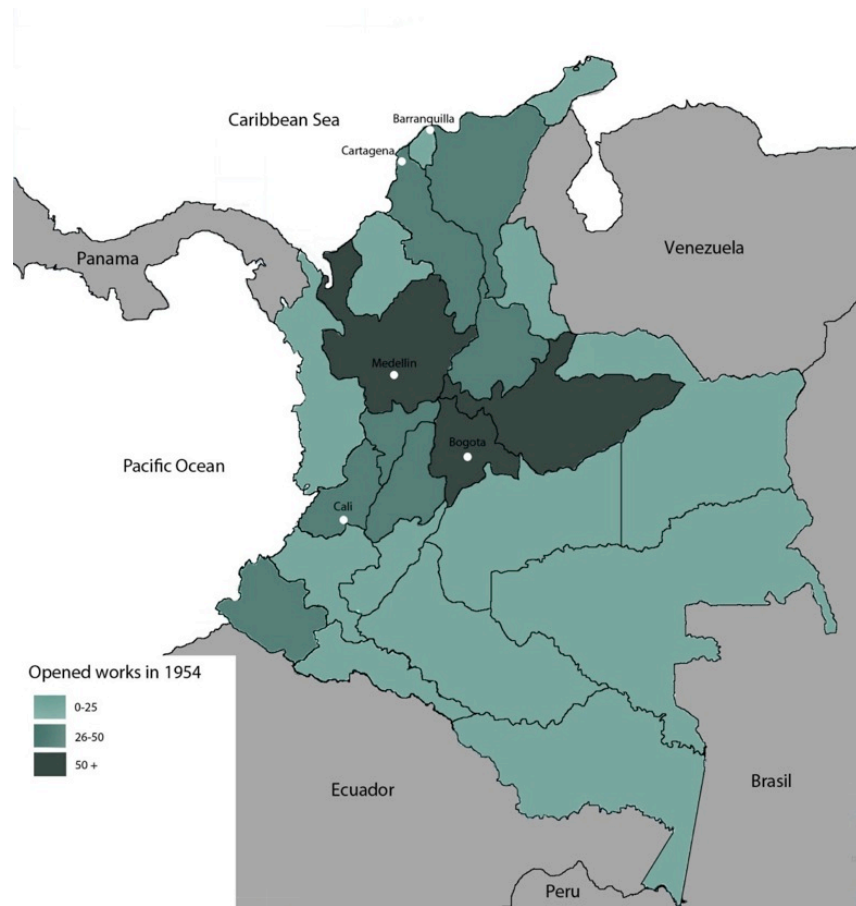


Figure 45. Map of distribution of projects by department in 1954 ©MPSB based on MOP data

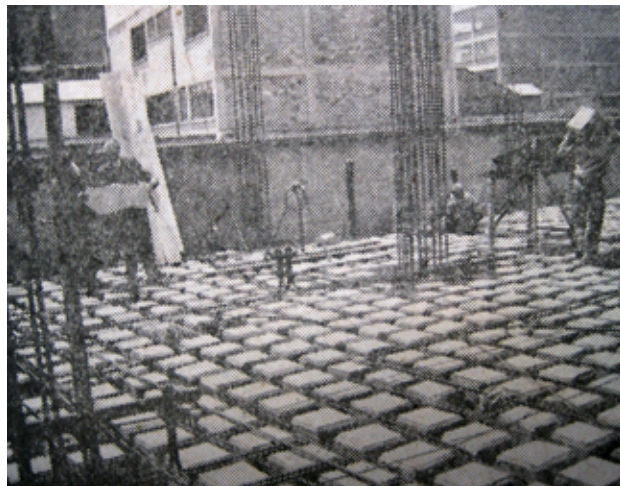


Figure 46. Press clippings emphasizing technical innovations in projects under construction © El Espectador

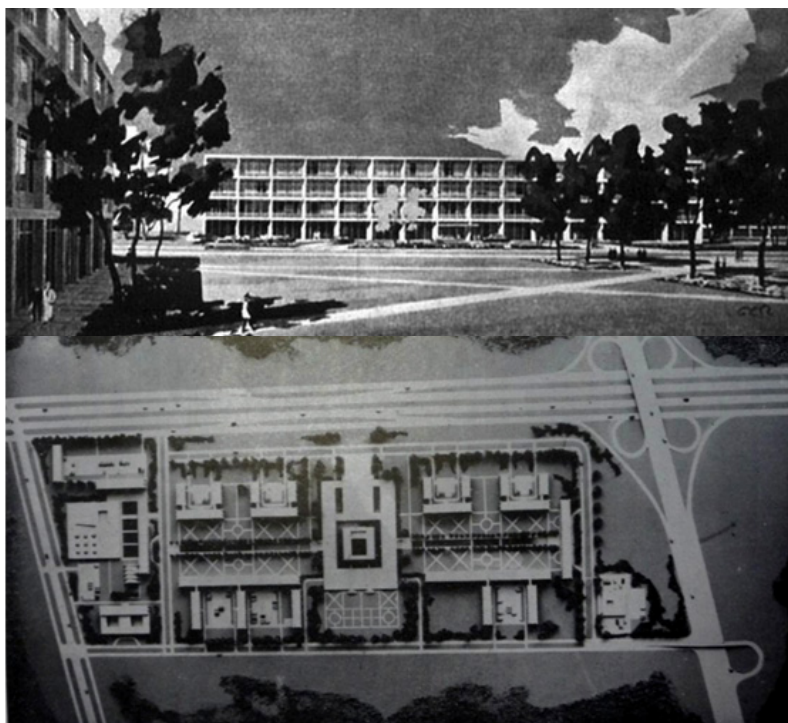


Figure 47. SOM's drawing and model for CAO project: these images were widely used to report the project © MOP

Data restriction

Figure 48. Sert and Wiener plan for Bogota, 1952, concentrating the urban operation to the historical centre of the city and its immediate surroundings © LCB

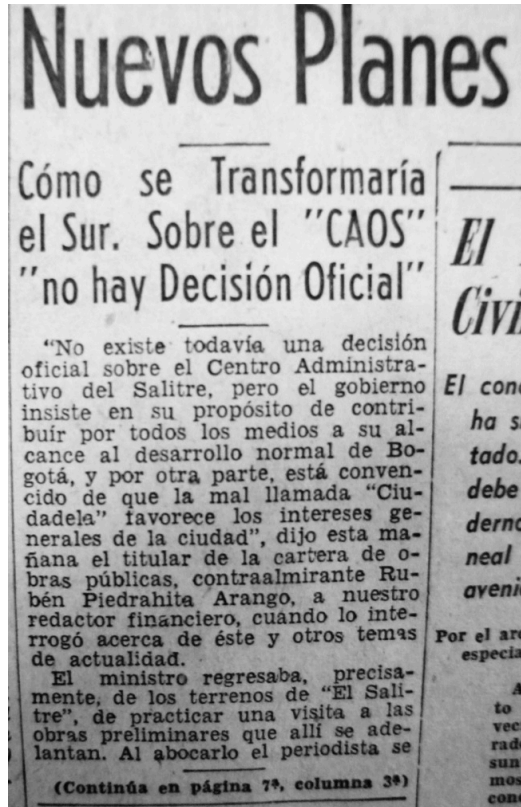


Figure 49. Press clipping about CAOS (i.e. Chaos), discussions in favour of and against the project © El Tiempo



Figure 50. Ministry of Public Works staff members: notably an important number of members were military officials © MOP



Figure 51. Inauguration ceremony of the National Plan of Public Works exhibition at the National Museum ©DIPE

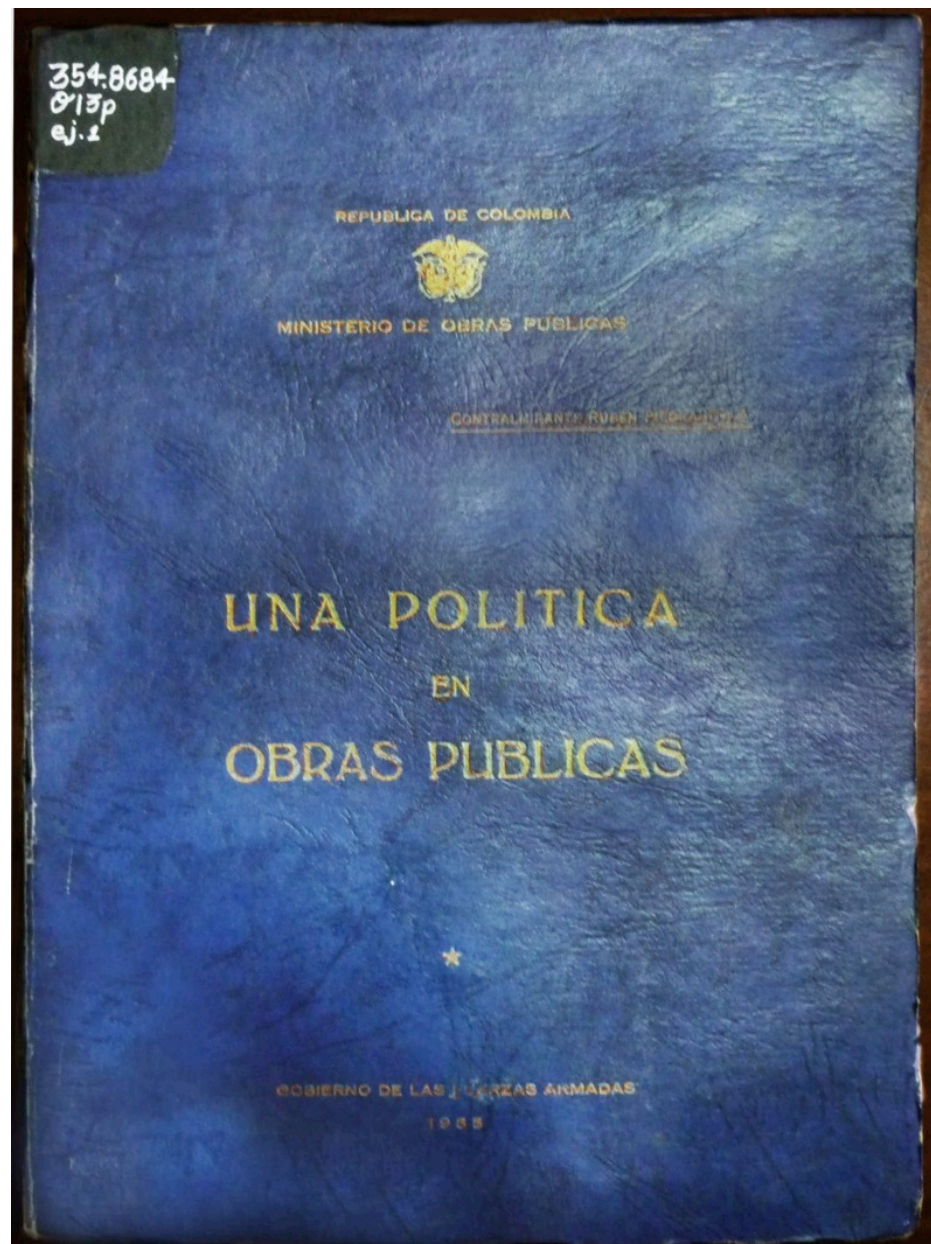


Figure 52. Rojas regime publication entitled: "Policy of Public Works", 1955 © MOP

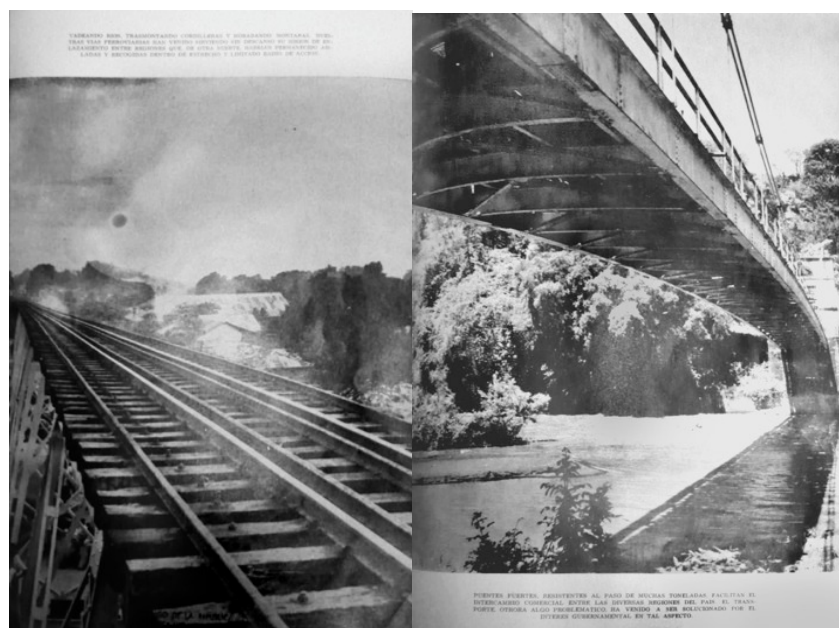


Figure 53. Extensive construction of railroads or roads in order to connect different regions © Colombia en Marcha



Figure 54. People attended exhibition of National Plan of Public Works: didactic explanation through models and perspectives ©DIPE

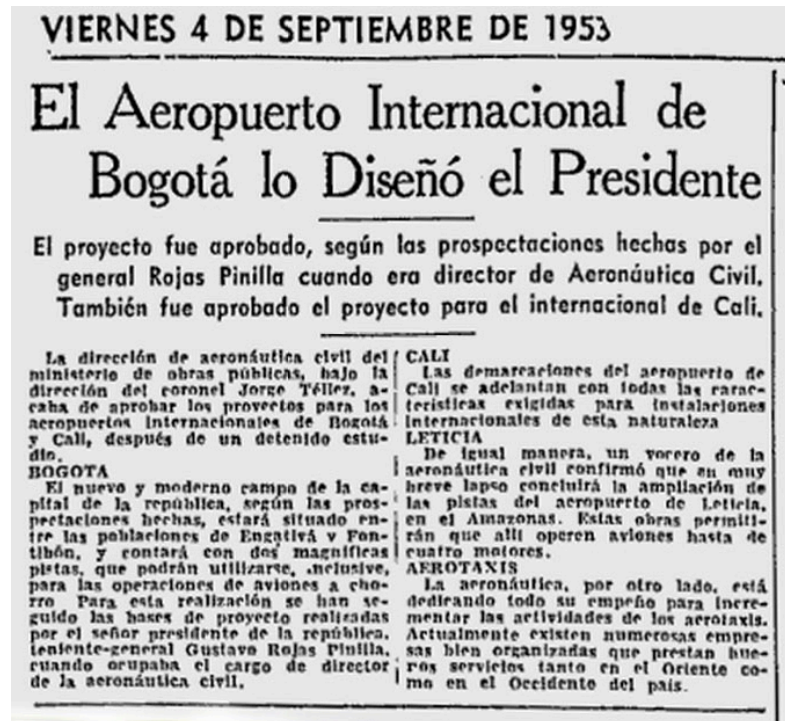


Figure 55. "Rojas designed the international airport" press clipping, 1953 © El Tiempo



Figure 56. Rojas Pinilla in a speech with prominent social and political figures of the country, 1953 © Discursos del General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla 1953

Data restriction

Figure 57. Projects in different regions were under construction for extended periods: Universidad Tecnológica Pereira © Carlos Drews



Figure 58. Featuring and expansion of the construction industry: inauguration of the Exhibitions Centre in Bogota, Corferias. © BLAA

4. A national project



Figure 59. Political capital built by Rojas, 1953 © El Tiempo



Figure 60. Regional location of facilities in Boyacá, 1954: ensured state presence in most of the area © Ochoa Planning Map (modified)

Data restriction

Figure 61. Axis from Bogota's centre to El Dorado airport: expedite mobilization
© MB

Ministerio de Obras Públicas

DEFINITIVA

2739

Número de la Construcción

AL TESORERO GENERAL DE LA REPUBLICA

Señor, le pago a **JUAN PEDRO DIAZ ALVARADO**

Dirección **BOGOTA**

La suma de **CUARENTA Y OCHO MIL NOVECIENTOS SESENTA Y TRES PESOS, 97/100 m, etc.** : **48.963,97**

-CERTIFICADO #1327 de 1.955-

CARGO - VIGENCIA DE	1955	
GRUPO	CUENTAS (ARTICULO)	DETALLE
117	2594	48.963,97

Valor de la obra ejecutada en la construcción de un muro de concreto armado de 530 metros de longitud para la defensa de la población de Magangué, de conformidad con el contrato de noviembre 17/55 y el acta #3, la cual se acompaña con la cuenta de cobro, así:

Valor del acta.....	\$ 65.285,30
Menos amortización anticipo.....	16.321,33
Saldo que se gira.....	<u>48.963,97</u>

Ref 0/D/1766/

CONTRALORIA

Revisado y correcto:

Certifico que hay saldo en la apropiación.

Aprobado por el Contralor General.

Jefe de la Oficina de Contraloría, Puerto

Por el Ministerio
El Secretario General

GUSTAVO MANTILLA

TESORERIA

Registrado por	Número	Aprobado
Páguese		

TESORERO GENERAL

DEFINITIVA

DUPLICADO

Figure 62. Payments to individuals in administrative files of Ministry of Public Works ©AGN

IN SOUTH AMERICA, TOO . . .

AETNA



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 Julio Santander C.
 Martínez Cordero & Cia. Ltda.

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The new Hospital Central Militar in Bogotá, Colombia is an outstanding example of contemporary architecture in the Latin American countries.

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*Pat. Pending
 †Under Inv.
 ‡Licensed under DuPont Patent

architectural FORUM / July 1955

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Figure 63. Advertisement of US firms and innovative materials used in Colombia, Military hospital Bogotá ©Architectural Forum



Figure 64. Experts visit, reported in the media: Paul Lester, Le Corbusier, Josep-Lluís Sert © El Tiempo,

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Figure 65. Pablo Tobon Uribe Hospital under construction on the outskirts of Medellín © Gabriel Carvajal

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Figure 66. Civil airports development was a War department programme, and this map shows the priorities in the Caribbean zone © NARA

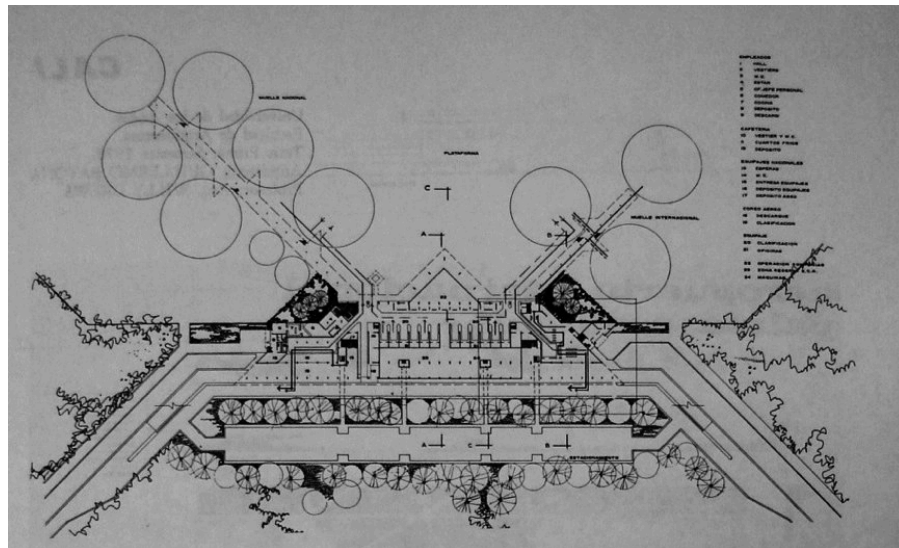


Figure 67. Blueprint of a Colombian airport: the journal compared it with contemporary international developments © ESCALA

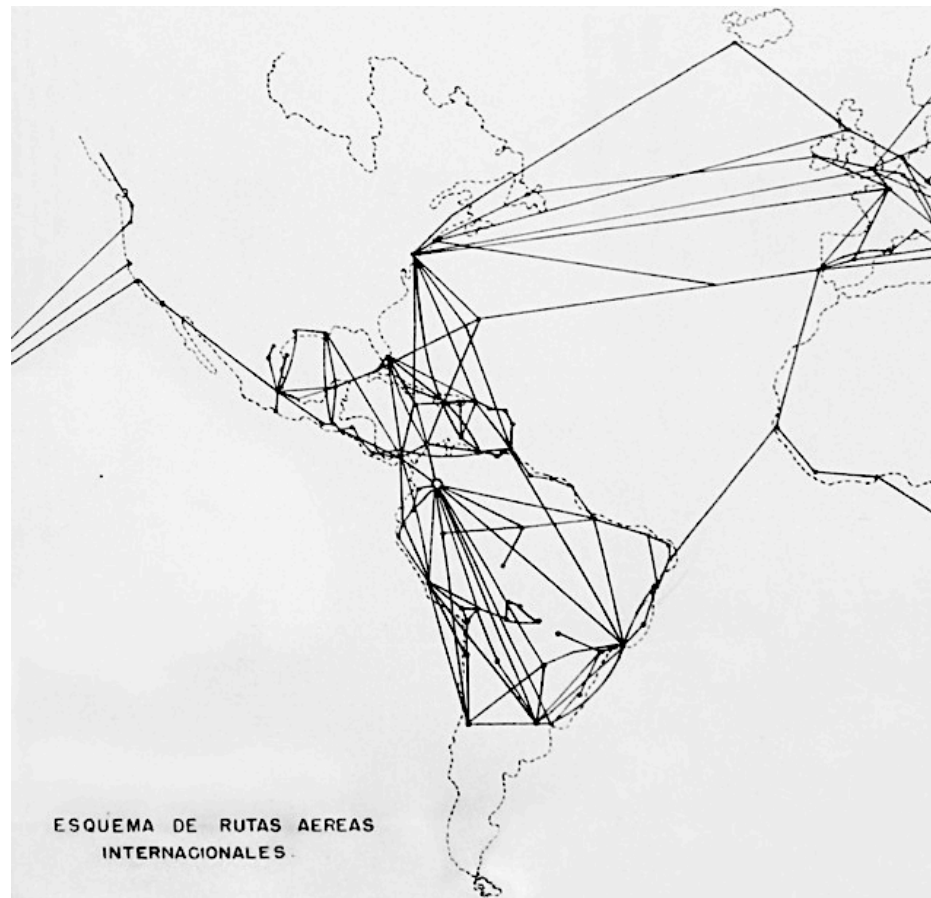


Figure 68. Image of Latin America routes reconfigured: Colombia as a hub, and intercontinental flights via the United States © DIPE

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Figure 69. Bogota military projects under construction in 1950s, shaped urban extension © LCB

Data restriction



Figure 70. The CIA internal report on Socialism in Latin America illustrates how nationalism was seen by the US agency. ©CIA/FOIA

5. The Naval College

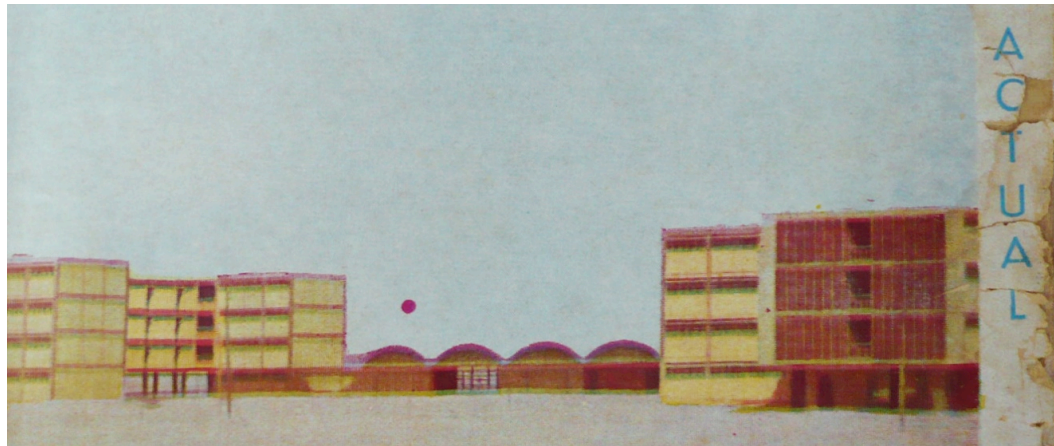


Figure 71. Modern architectural complex © ENAP



Figure 72. Saturated space at the old naval college (1935) in the outskirts of the historical centre, which image resembles colonial features © Corredera magazine

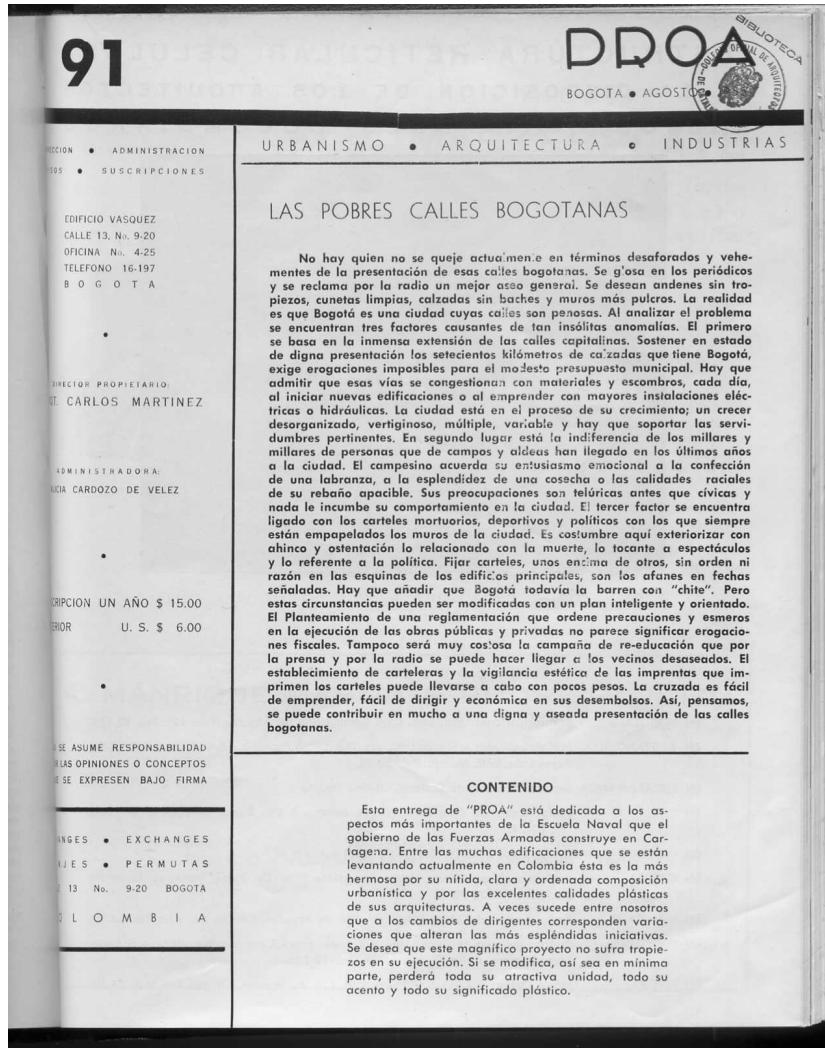


Figure 73. Along with pointing out the critical condition of urban growth, this issue highlights the architectural qualities of the ENAP project in Cartagena © Proa



Figure 74. ENAP classrooms: the complex's educational role seems prominent, 2008 © MPSB

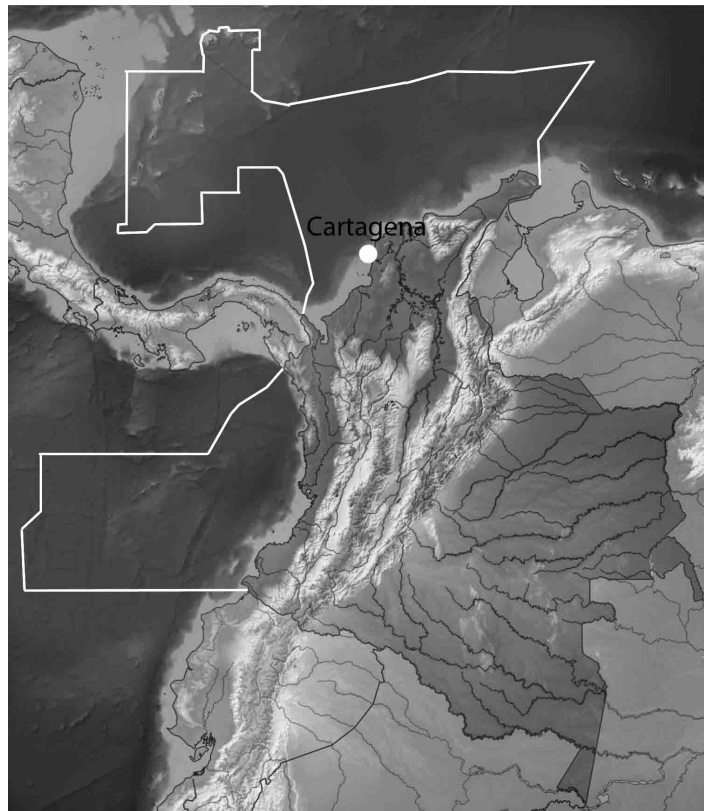


Figure 75. Location of ENAP in Caribbean Sea © World Geographic (modified)



Figure 76. Cartagena's representative images: Colonial fortress and historic centre 2008 © Juan Marulanda/ MPSB

Data restriction

Figure 77. Aerial picture before urban development, 1954 © IGAC

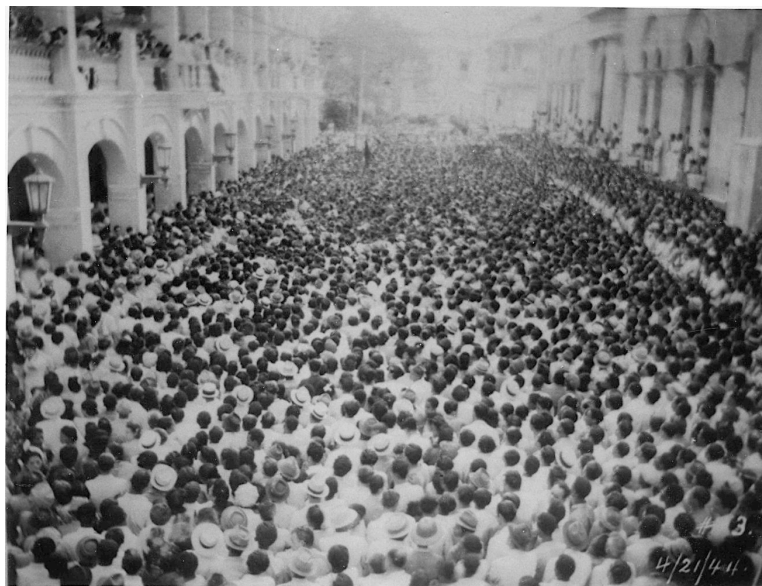


Figure 78. Mass support for the ENAP to remain in Cartagena ©FHC

Data restriction



Figure 79. Location of sixteenth-century fortresses in Cartagena's bay © IGAC (modified)

Data restriction



Figure 80. Navy sites in Cartagena in 1974: keeping the same locations of the colonial fortresses © IGAC (modified)

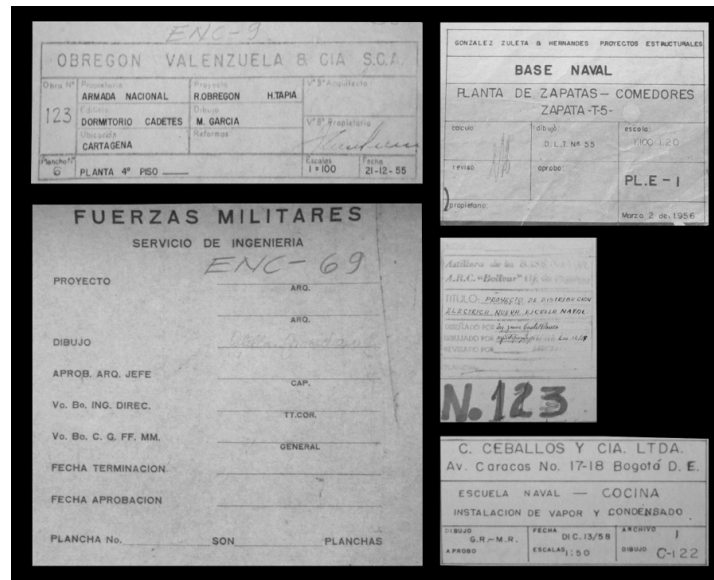


Figure 81. O&V label of Naval College blueprints showing different years, and people involved © AB



Figure 82. Different covers using the same image © ENAP / Corredera Magazine / Proa

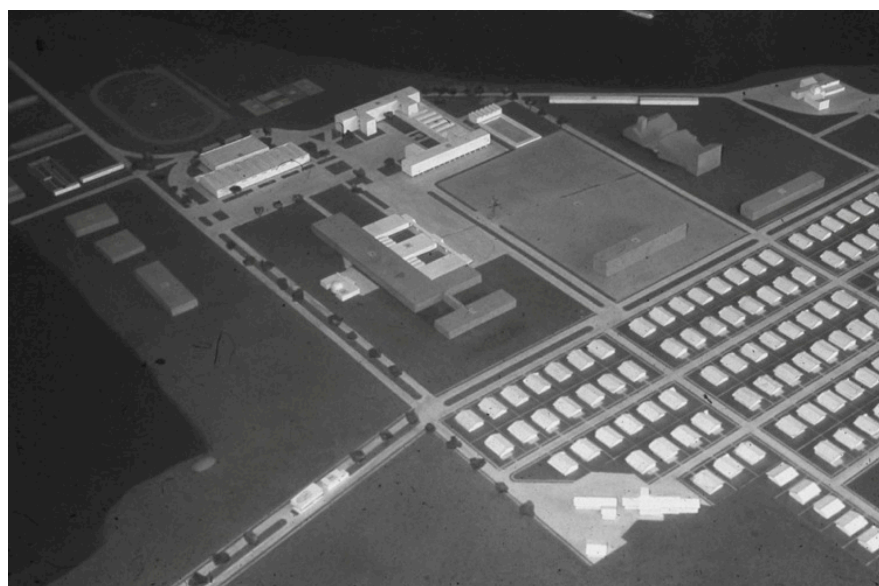


Figure 83. Picture of the original model featuring the proposal of later additions (the initial project in white) c. 1970 © ENAP

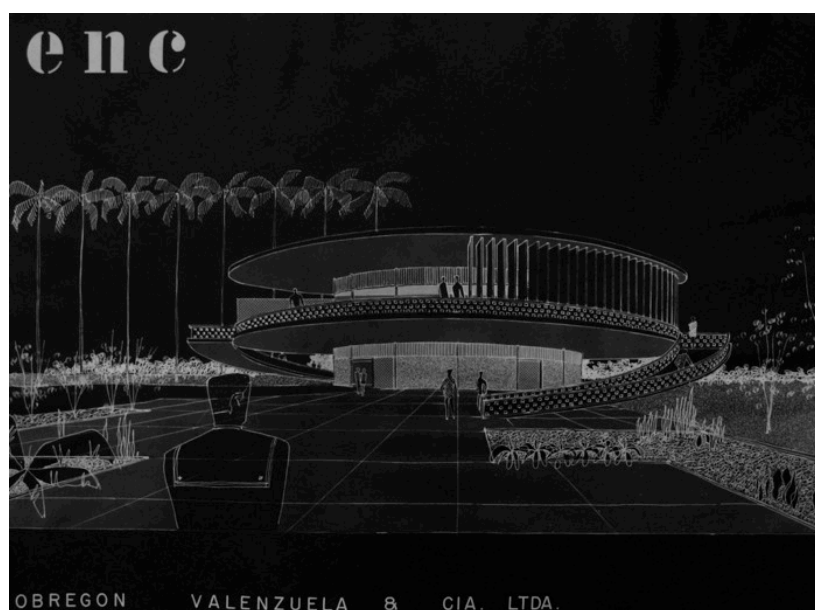


Figure 84. Image O&V Brochure for ENAP project: perspectives without reference to the military character of the complex ©ENAP

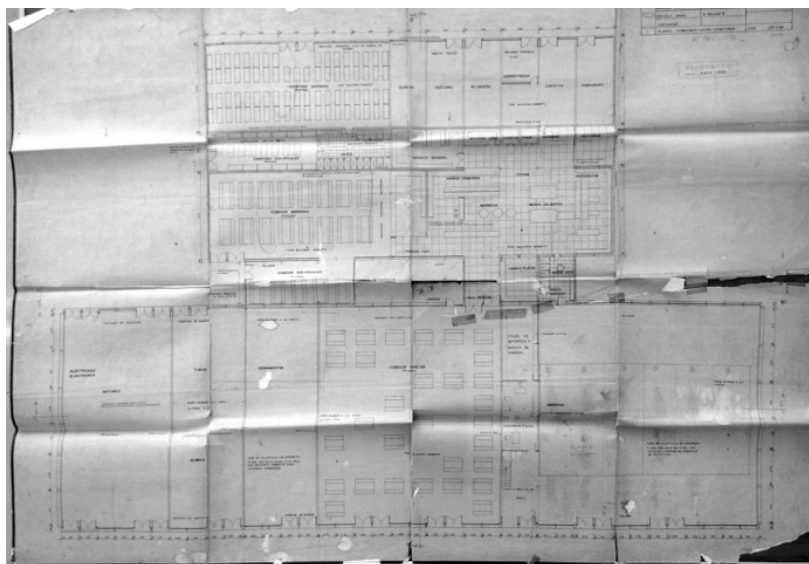


Figure 85. Construction blueprints of the cadets' dining room © ENAP

Organización nomenclatura edificios Escuela:
 Por Orden # 040-DEN
 de hoy se reglamenta el sistema de denominación y numeración de los edificios de la Escuela Naval en Manzanillo así:
 Edificio Principal, sector central "Capitán Bizarro"; bloque Norte "Almirante Padilla"; bloque Sur "Almirante Bizarro". Edificio de Aulas: "Capitán Fero"; Edificio del Coloso, Comedores, Lavandería etc. "Capitán Fero". Edificio de Talleres: "Juan de Sumovilla".

Figure 86. Annotation in the ENAP logbook about denomination of buildings © ENAP

01-VJ-85

Figure 87. Spread sheet of the programme, areas, phases, and values © AB



Figure 88. Aerial view of first ENAP buildings proves the difficulty of identifying the conformation of buildings © ENAP

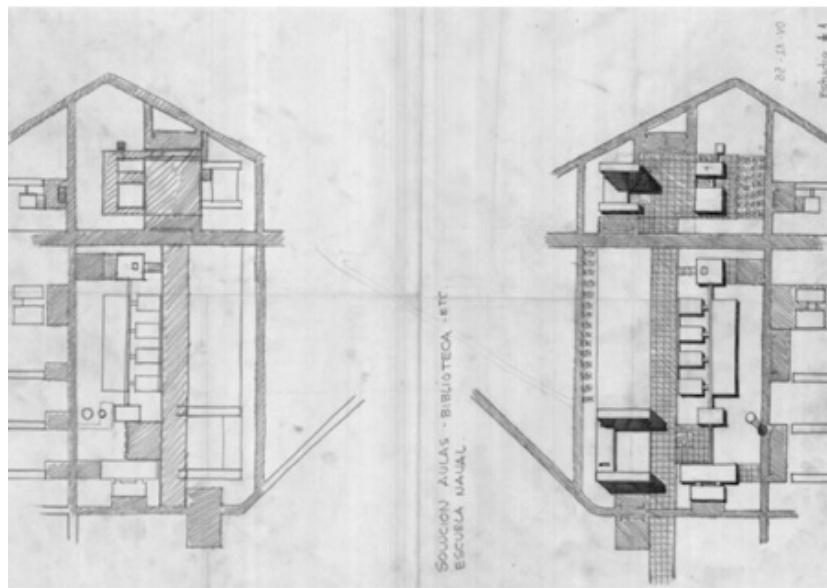


Figure 89. Naval College work sketches looking for solutions of the programme, O&V © AB



Figure 90. Naval College first version of the urban plan: note the change on the morphology of the terrain, and a complete different layout, O&V, 1955-1961
© AB

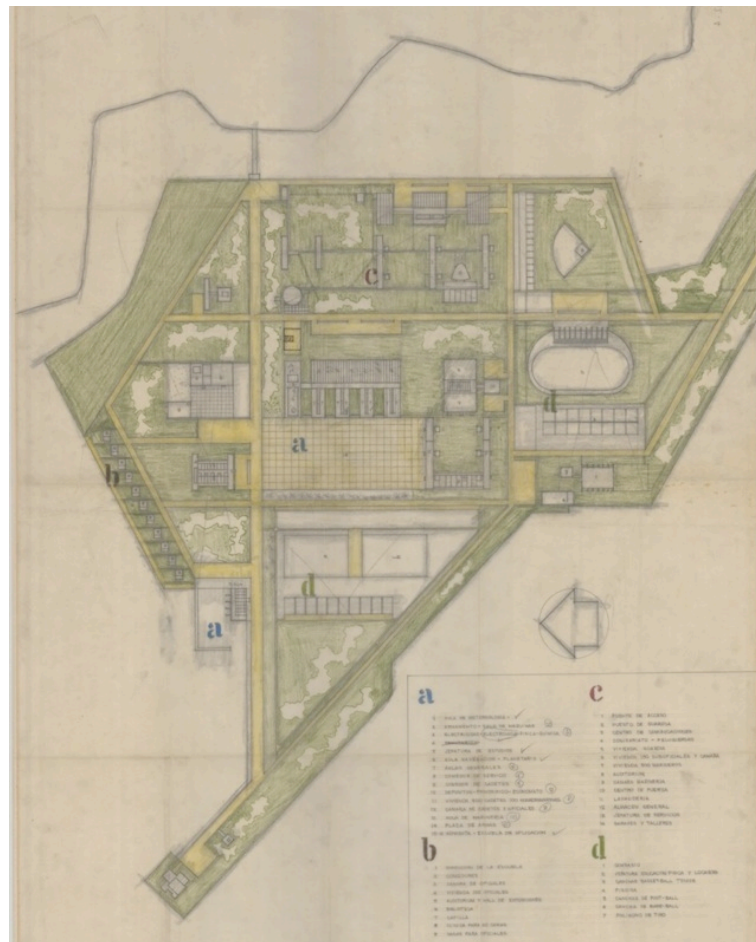


Figure 91. Naval College, approved general plan O&V, 1955-1961 © AB



Figure 92. Buildings interconnected: transition on interior and exterior spaces
 ©MPSB

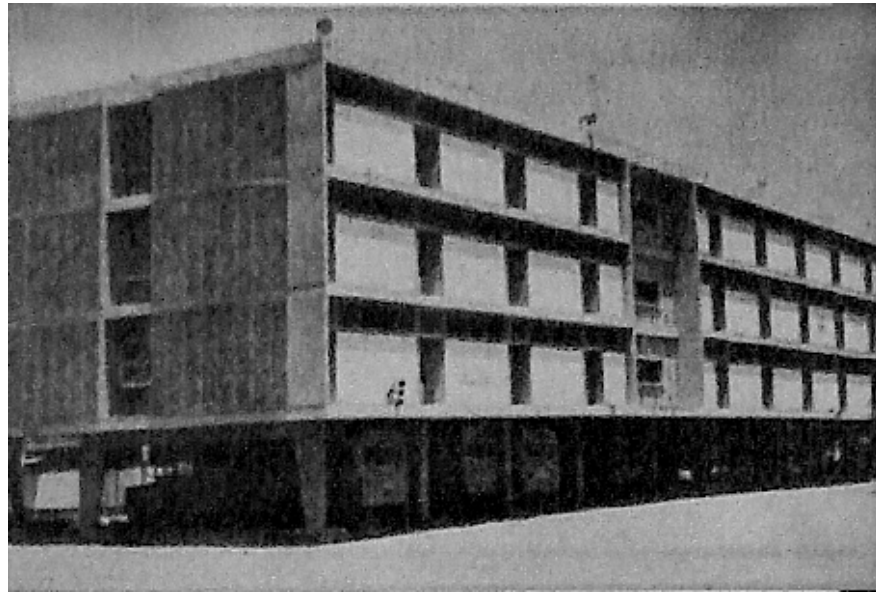


Figure 93. Volume of the dormitories in the 1960s, and 2010: preserving main features but the free ground floor © Corredera magazine / MPSB

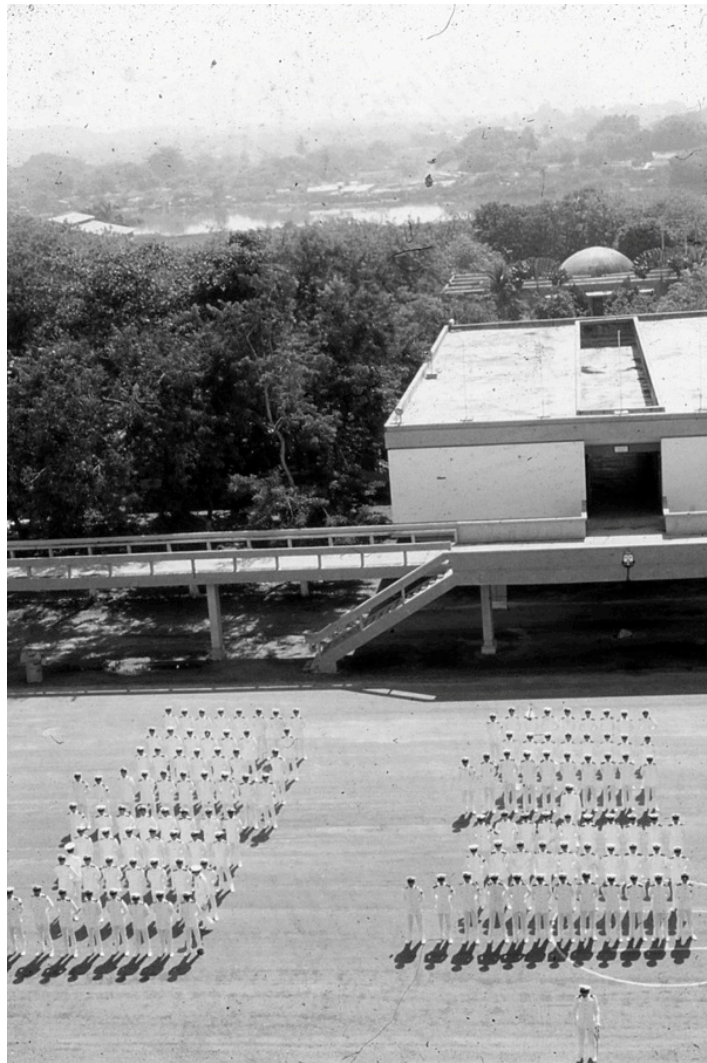


Figure 94. Officials' assembly in front of the class rooms © ENAP

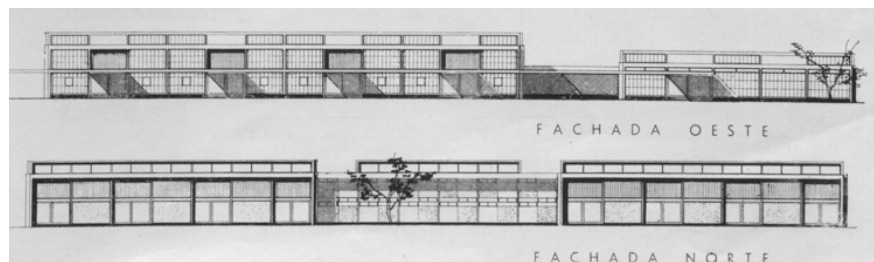


Figure 95. Dining room elevations © Proa 91

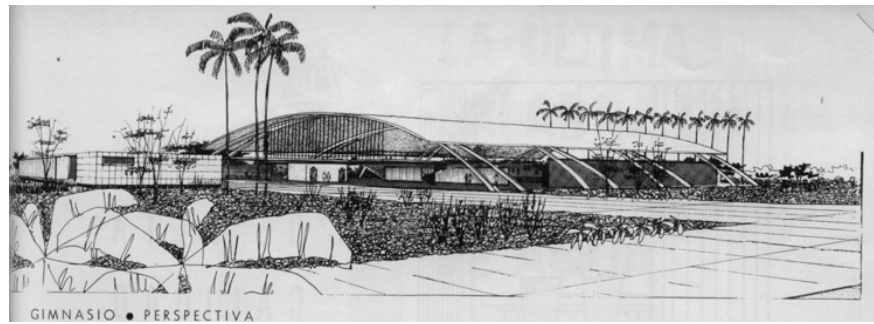


Figure 96. Gym perspective © Proa 91



Figure 97. Aerial image of the first group of buildings illustrating the diverse formal solutions adopted © Corredra 38

Data restriction

Figure 98. ENAP in 1959, during the period construction works were suspended © SAMPER/BEER

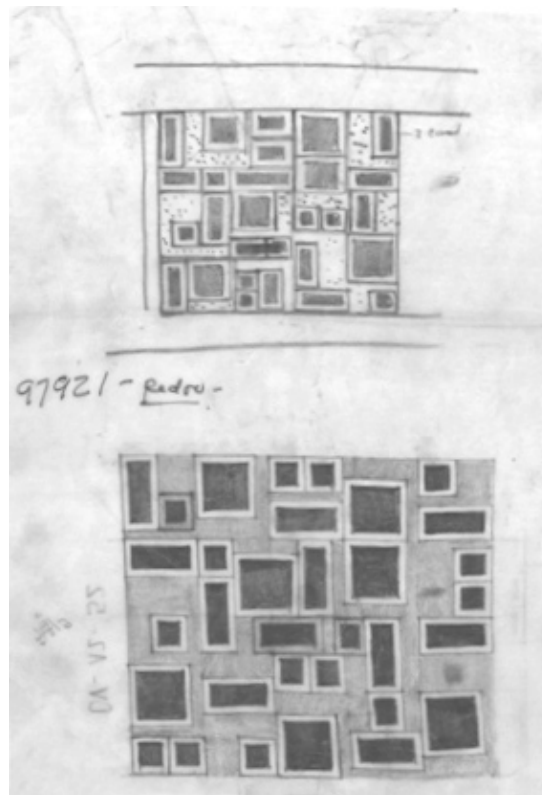


Figure 99. Geometric composition: detail of celosias bricks to enclose spaces allowing illumination and ventilation © ENAP

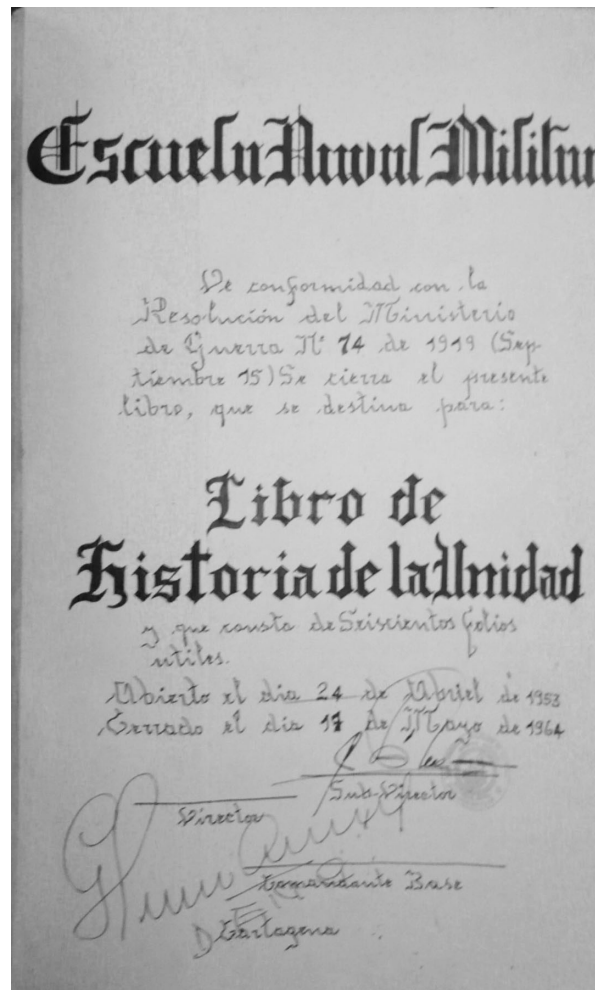


Figure 100. Logbook of the ENAP, rare notes about construction ©ENAP

6. Tracing connections



Figure 101. CUA's newspaper note about Obregon's involvement in contemporary discussions ©CUA

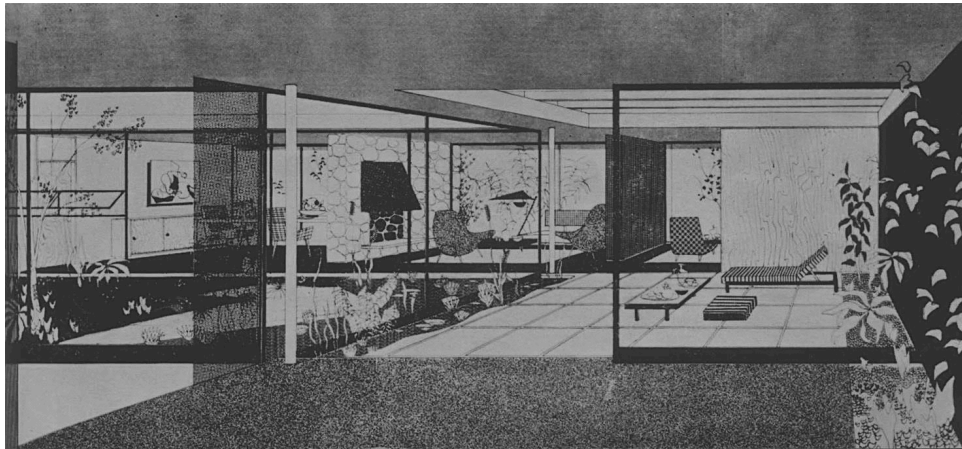


Figure 102. O&V suburbia houses in Bogota: primary experience of the architectural practice ©O&V/EM/E



Figure 103. Modernist spaces with local adaptations: Hotel Casino Cartagena, 1955 © CARANGO



Figure 104. Collaborative design at O&V office © O&V



Figure 105. Picture of Banco de Bogota in SOM News Archives © AAA



Figure 106. Study and discussion of foreign publications were a common practice at O&V office © O&V

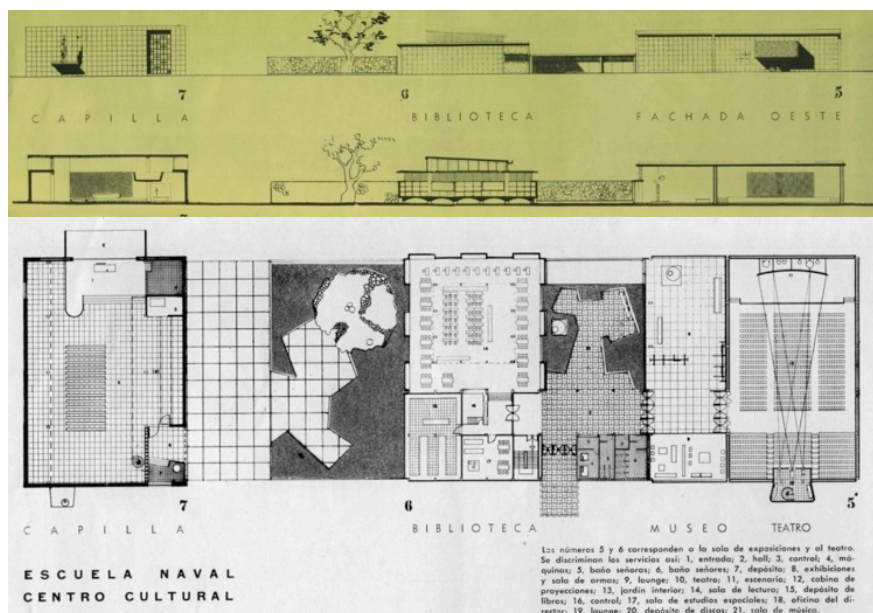


Figure 107. ENAP chapel, library and cultural centre were presented in sets: façades and plans. © Proa

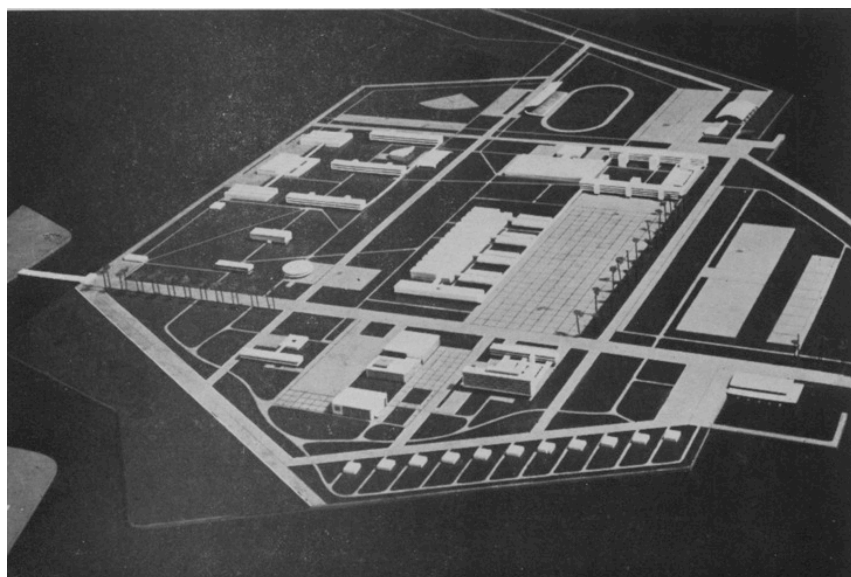


Figure 108. ENAP model became the official image of both the National Plan of Public Works and Naval College, 1955 © ENAP

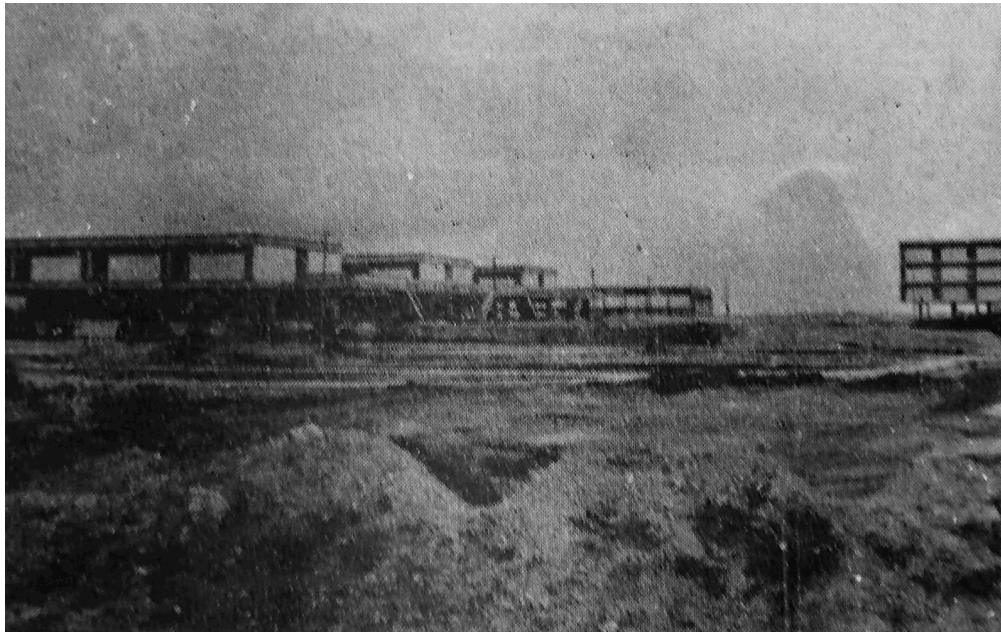


Figure 109. ENAP still under construction was inhabited by cadets © ENAP

Data restriction

Figure 110. Family memories: surprising modern architecture in a colonial city c. 1972 © MPSB

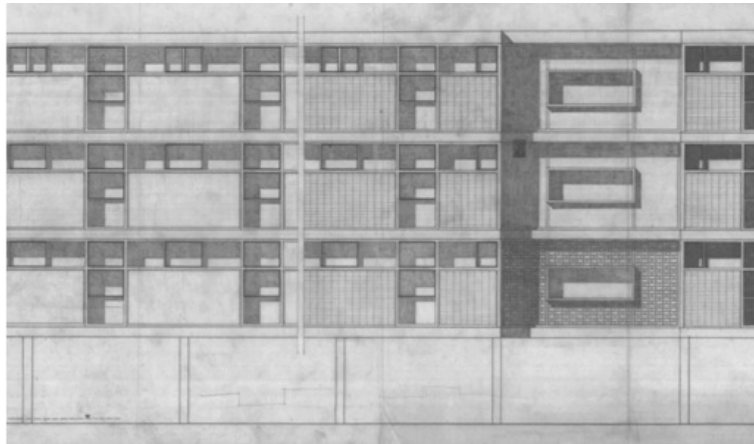


Figure 111. Characteristic brise-soleils of the dormitories © AB

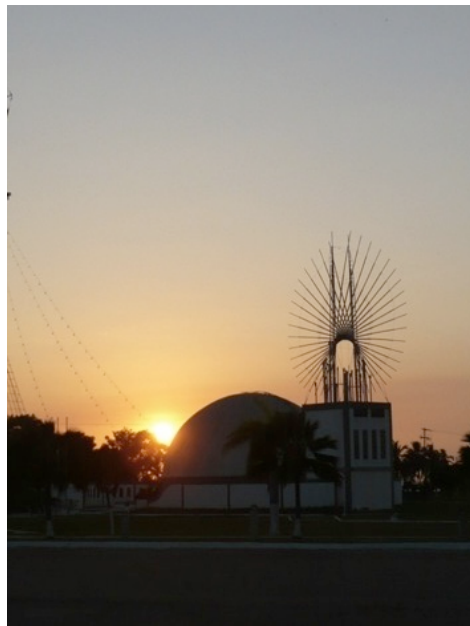


Figure 112. Solar calendar at ENAP since the 1970s has been taken as the representative building © Maria del Pilar Sanchez Beltran



Figure 113. Modified perception of spaces through shades: cameras and corridors view c.1960s © ENAP

Data restriction



Figure 115. Dispersed and elevated buildings to reduce vulnerability and adapt to climatic conditions © O&V

7. Architecture as political project



Figure 116. Framed projects, Urban Centre Antonio Nariño (CUAN) © Colombia en marcha



Figure 117. Transparency and openness in the new architecture: ENAP Museum
© Proa



Figure 118. Former image of El Dorado Bogotá's airport c.1970s © GT



Figure 119. Caja Agraria in Barranquilla, 1953-1961 remarkable example of modern architecture © MLR-UNC

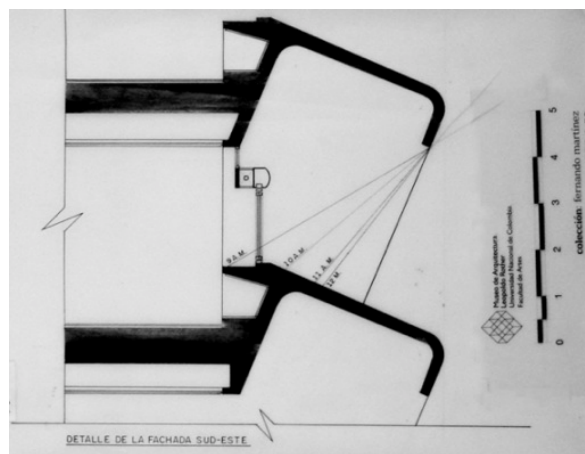


Figure 120. Technical detail of Caja Agraria's brise-soleils: one of its most prominent features © MLR-UNC



Figure 121. Press clipping about a new project for a bus Service Centre (i.e. bus terminal) 1954 © El Tiempo

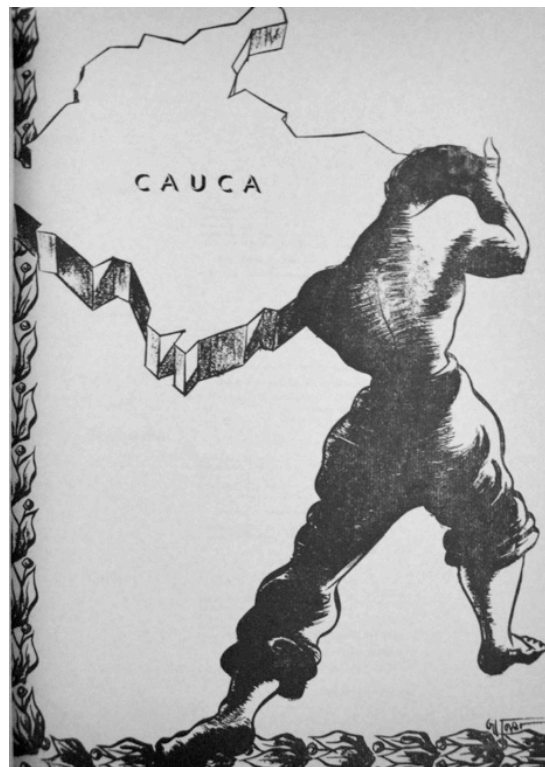


Figure 122. MOP reports using popular icons to resemble mass support for National Plan of Public Works © Un país que trabaja

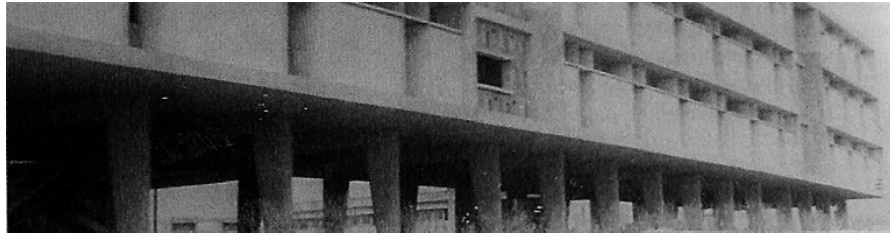


Figure 123. Image of the elevated pavilions at ENAP: users confronted with novel forms ©Corredera

Data restriction



Figure 124. Modern spaces carrying a positive social meaning such as Olaya Herrera Airport, Medellín © Alejandro Agudelo

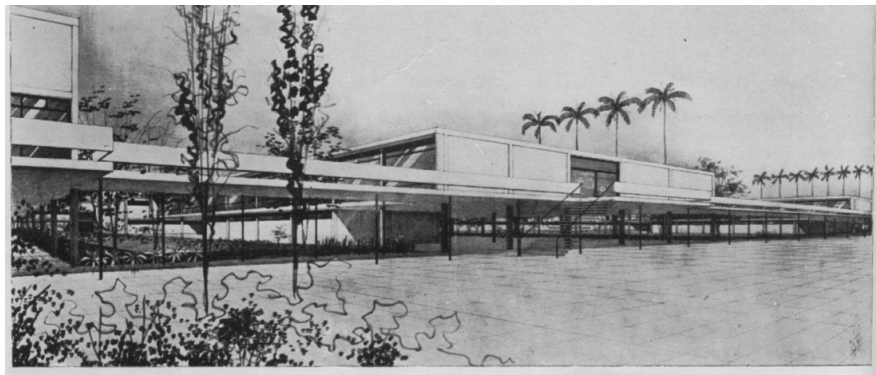


Figure 125. Universal and local spaces in the interior of ENAP: modern construction adapted to the context © ENAP



Figure 126. Hybrid and everyday architecture: alternative response to modernity:
hall inside the pavilions ENAP © MPSB



Figure 127. Few architectural projects selected as representative of Colombian
modernity between 1945-1955: Bogota country club © HITCHCOCK

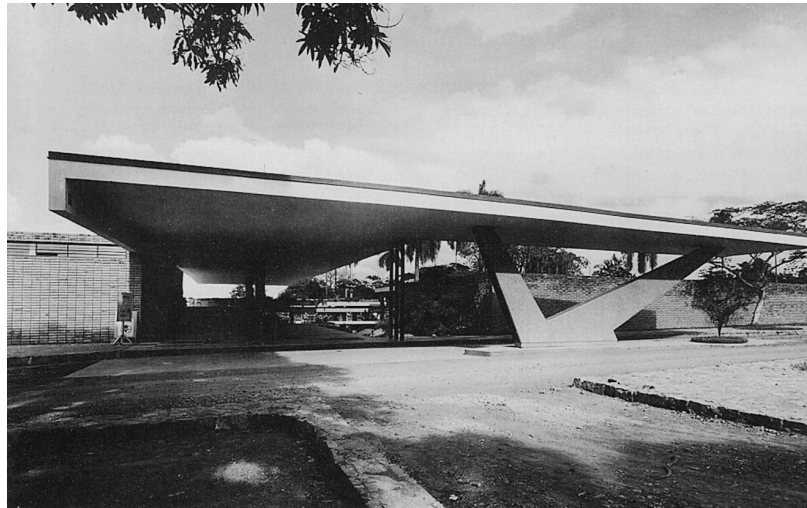


Figure 128. Most Colombian modern architecture has fall outside records despite its architectural values, Cali Countryside Club, 1955 © CARANGO



Figure 129. Media coverage helped the dictatorship to shape the representation of it and its products © DIPE



Figure 130. Revision of common interpretations: alternative view of the ENAP dormitories 2010 © MPSB

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www.eltiempo.com
www.heinonline.org
www.icaadocs.mfah.org
www.jstor.org
www.loc.gov/catdir
www.oas.org
www.sagepub.com
www.tandfonline.com

Appendix

1. Extended comparison of census: Colombia 1930s – 1970s

	Inhabitants	Urban	PGR	AAGR	10	1938	Urban	PGR	AAGR	10	Inhabitants	Urban	PGR	AAGR	13	1964	Urban	PGR	AAGR	13	1973
City																					
Bogota	235,421.00	20.5%	63.5%	4.20	40.3%	330,312.00	40.3%	3.44	664,306.00	37.7%	101.2%	32.7%	5.52	1,697,811.00	38.5%	155.5%	7.48	2,571,548.00	41.4%	51.5%	4.72
Medellin	120,044.00	10.5%	51.7%	4.25	40.2%	168,266.00	40.2%	3.43	397,738.00	19.6%	136.4%	19.6%	6.84	772,887.00	17.5%	94.3%	5.24	1,093,191.00	17.6%	41.4%	3.93
Barranquilla	139,974.00	12.2%	116.9%	8.05	152,348.00	8.8%	18.85	296,357.00	14.6%	94.3%	14.6%	94.3%	5.25	498,301.00	11.3%	68.1%	4.68	665,917.00	10.7%	33.6%	3.27
Cali	122,847.00	10.3%	169.8%	10.44	101,883.00	-17.1%	-1.85	245,568.00	12.1%	141.0%	12.1%	141.0%	7.00	637,939.00	14.5%	159.8%	7.62	918,057.00	14.8%	43.9%	4.13
Manizales	81,091.00	7.1%	87.7%	6.50	86,027.00	6.1%	0.59	126,201.00	6.2%	46.7%	6.2%	46.7%	2.99	221,916.00	5.0%	75.8%	4.44	229,895.00	3.7%	3.2%	0.35
Cartagena	92,494.00	8.1%	80.0%	6.05	84,937.00	-8.2%	-0.87	111,291.00	5.5%	31.0%	5.5%	31.0%	2.10	242,085.00	5.5%	117.5%	6.16	312,357.00	5.0%	29.1%	2.88
Ibague	56,333.00	4.9%	86.2%	6.41	61,447.00	9.1%	0.85	98,695.00	4.9%	60.6%	4.9%	60.6%	3.71	163,661.00	3.7%	65.8%	3.97	208,599.00	3.4%	27.5%	2.74
Perera	50,629.00	4.0%	104.7%	7.43	60,492.00	19.5%	1.80	89,675.00	4.4%	48.2%	4.4%	48.2%	3.07	179,133.00	4.1%	99.8%	5.47	208,430.00	3.4%	16.4%	1.70
Cucuta	49,279.00	4.3%	67.1%	5.27	57,248.00	16.2%	1.51	95,150.00	4.7%	66.2%	3.99	175,336.00	4.0%	84.3%	4.81	278,299.00	4.5%	58.7%	5.27	2.88	
Bucaramanga	44,083.00	3.8%	76.9%	5.87	51,263.00	16.3%	1.52	107,317.00	5.3%	100.3%	5.84	229,748.00	5.2%	114.1%	6.03	296,657.00	4.8%	29.1%	2.88		
Pastoralejo	43,162.00	3.8%	48.7%	4.04	44,844.00	15.0%	1.41	81,103.00	4.0%	63.4%	3.85	117,779.00	2.6%	39.2%	2.58	147,779.00	2.4%	30.9%	3.04		
Santa Marta	29,988.00	2.6%	19.1%	1.76	34,294.00	14.4%	1.35	50,494.00	2.5%	47.2%	3.02	89,790.00	2.0%	77.8%	4.53	121,110.00	2.0%	34.9%	3.38		
Nariva	30,942.00	2.7%	71.5%	5.84	33,245.00	7.4%	0.72	47,354.00	2.3%	42.4%	2.76	104,471.00	2.4%	120.6%	6.98	128,755.00	2.1%	23.2%	2.35		
Popayan	31,829.00	2.8%	57.3%	4.63	30,038.00	-5.6%	-0.58	44,893.00	2.2%	49.2%	3.12	76,568.00	1.7%	70.9%	4.21	91,575.00	1.5%	19.6%	2.01		
Tunja	19,064.00	1.7%	78.5%	5.97	20,236.00	6.1%	0.60	27,400.00	1.3%	35.9%	2.36	68,905.00	1.6%	151.5%	7.35	79,391.00	1.3%	15.2%	1.59		
Total main cities	1,147,180.00	100.0%	79.1%	6.00	1,321,700.00	15.2%	1.43	2,030,031.00	100.0%	53.6%	3.36	4,413,723.00	100.0%	117.4%	6.16	6,216,074.00	100.0%	40.6%	3.86		
Other urban					1,120,640.00																
Urban total	2,437,848.00				3.9%	2,333,680.00			23.3%	1.63	6,919,066.00			121.4%	6.30	10,334,383.00		31.0%	38.5%	3.68	
Total urban	2,437,848.00				3.9%	2,333,680.00			36.0%	67.6%	4.05	9,235,140.00	33.0%	117.5%	6.16	13,541,997.00		46.6%	4.34		
Total Colombia	7,851,000.00				34.1%	2.98	8,701,816.00				32.7%	2.20	17,484,508.00		51.4%	3.24	20,785,235.00		18.9%	1.94	
Data from National census of population and housing, 1938, 1951, 1964 and 1973																					
PGR - Population Growth Rate																					

2. List O&V projects

Year	Name	Function	Area	City
1946	Muña Club	social		Sibaté, Muña lake
1949	House Jesus Maria Montoya	house		Bogotá
1949	Jose Maria Obregon House	house		Bogotá
1949	House Lucia E de Obregón	house		Bogotá, Usaquén
1949	House Eduardo Child	house		Bogotá, Usaquén
1950	Building to let	house		Barranquilla
1950	House Adolfo Támara	house		Barranquilla
1950	House Mario Santodomingo	house		Barranquilla
1950	House Samuel Martelo	house		Barranquilla
1950	House to Raffle	house		Barranquilla, Pradomar
1950	House Josefina de Salazar	house		Bogotá
1950	House Roberto Herrera	house		Bogotá
1950	House William Goad by Post	house		ND
1951	House Alfonso Mejía Navarro	house		Barranquilla
1951	house to raffle	house		Barranquilla, Pradomar
1951	Building of flats	house		Bogotá
1951	House Álvaro López	house		Bogotá
1951	House Ilse de Boy	house		Bogotá
1951	House Manuel Arias Restrepo	house		Bogotá
1951	Country club with Jorge Arango	social		Bogotá
1951	House Joaquín Villegas	house		Cota
1951	Muña club	social		Guatavita, Tominé Lake
1952	Building to let and radio theatre	house		Bogotá
1952	House Carmen A de Umaña	house		Bogotá
1952	House Heinz Kessler	house		Bogotá
1952	House Inés y Ana Rodríguez F	house		Bogotá
1953	House Maria E de Byngton	house	240	Bogotá
1953	House Roberto Barreto	house	274	Bogotá
1953	House Beatriz Salazar de R	house	299	Bogotá
1953	House Hernando Valdiri	house	418	Bogotá
1953	House Raul Castro	house	586	Bogotá
1953	House Arcadio Plazas	house	327.46	Bogotá
1953	House Augusto Mechán	house		Bogotá
1953	House Bernardo G Herrera	house		Bogotá
1953	House Ernesto Martelo	house		Bogotá
1953	House G Aldana & Obreval	house		Bogotá
1953	House Gabriel Hernández	house		Bogotá
1953	house in Bogota owner?	house		Bogotá, Bella Suiza
1953	House in Bogota owner?	house		Bogotá, Chico
1953	House in Bogota	house		Bogotá, Usaquén
1954	Warehouses owner?	industry		Barranquilla
1954	House Mario Santodomingo	house	488.35	Barranquilla 2?
1954	House Daniel Ovando	house	168	Bogotá
1954	House Margarita de Gutiérrez	house	235	Bogotá
1954	House Jacqueline de Aparicio	house	269	Bogotá
1954	House Josefina de Reyes	house	270	Bogotá
1954	House Nora O de Arias –	house	290	Bogotá

1954	House Beatriz Salazar de R	house	296	Bogotá
1954	House Rafael Obregon G	house	301	Bogotá
1954	House Teresa de Umaña	house	316	Bogotá
1954	House José Maria Calderon	house	348	Bogotá
1954	House Hernando Murillo	house	463	Bogotá
1954	House Edmundo Merchán	house	585	Bogotá
1954	House to raffle Savings Bank	house	149.73	Bogotá
1954	House Jorge Pardo	house	222.67	Bogotá
1954	House Emiliano Posada	house	283.73	Bogotá
1954	House Juan Buraglia	house	545.14	Bogotá
1954	Colombian Industrial Bank BIC	house		Bogotá
1954	Bocagrande Hospital	hospital		Cartagena
1954	Social club	social		Pereira
1955	House G Bermúdez & R Obregón	house	241	Bogotá
1955	House Álvaro Bernal	house	285	Bogotá
1955	House Enrique Aparicio	house	295	Bogotá
1955	House José Bravo Lazcano	house	298	Bogotá
1955	House Alberto Marin	house	306	Bogotá
1955	House Fabio Jaramillo	house	318	Bogotá
1955	House Manuel Pardo Umaña	house	488	Bogotá
1955	Mortgage central bank employees dwelling	house		Bogotá
1955	House Rafael Obregón	house	341	Bogotá 2?
1955	William Villa Uribe house	house	435	Bogotá, Chico
1955	House in Bogota owner?	house		Bogotá, Usaquén
1955	House Bogota, Usaquén	house	450	Bogotá, Usaquén
1955	Naval College of Cartagena	institutional		Cartagena
1956	House Inés de Hernández	house	179	Bogotá
1956	House Bernardo Matín	house	215	Bogotá
1956	House Maria Teresa de Pardo	house	282	Bogotá
1956	House Bernabé Pineda	house	286	Bogotá
1956	House Benjamín Gutierrez	house	326	Bogotá
1956	House Roberto Wills	house	358	Bogotá
1956	House Jorge Restrepo	house	396	Bogotá
1956	House Andrés Restrepo	house	738	Bogotá
1956	Guillermo Eraso Anexxi House	house	418	Cartagena
1956	Mortgage Central Bank Houses BCH	house		Cartagena
1956	House Evaristo Obregón	house	543	Medellín
1957	House Lucia de Obregón	house	347	Bogotá
1957	House Fanny S de Restrepo	house	396	Bogotá
1957	House Pedro Muñoz	house	458	Bogotá
1957	House Carlos Corredor Pardo	house	577	Bogotá
1957	House Andrés Restrepo	house	606	Bogotá
1957	House Eduardo Shaio	house	836	Bogotá
1957	House Rafael Obregon	house	361.43	Bogotá, Chico 3?
1957	Jose Vicente Mogollon House	house	410	Cartagena
1957	Social Assistance of Bolivar	institutional		Cartagena
1957	Social Club Cartagena	Social		Cartagena
1957	Country club	social		Ibagué
1958	Sanatorium for the mentally ill with Ricaurte Carrizosa & Prieto	hospital		Barranquilla
1958	House Miguel López	house	400	Bogotá
1958	House David Puyana	house	508	Bogotá
1958	House Alejandro Tovar	house	548	Bogotá
1958	French and Italian Bank	financial		Bogotá
1958	Emilia Moreno house	house		Bogotá, Lago
1958	House Adalberto Gallardo	house	630	San Andrés

1959	(Julio?) Mario Santodomingo	house		Barranquilla, Pradomar 3?
1959	House Julio de Mier Riaño	house	252	Bogotá
1959	House Eduardo Moreno	house	470	Bogotá
1959	House Alfredo Miani	house	537	Bogotá
1959	House Emilia Moreno [same as Eduardo Moreno]	house	483.41	Bogotá
1959	The national insurance building with Pizano Pradilla Caro	commercial		Bogotá
1959	Mexico theatre	theatre		Bogotá
1959	Olympic Villa	sports		Cartagena
1959	American Casino Hotel	hotel		Cartagena, Bocagrande,
1959	Eduardo Gaviria House	house		Cartagena, Castillogrande
1959	Periquitos island house	house		Cartagena, Rosario Islands
1959	House Germán Fernández	house	766	San Andrés
1960	Cervico Shop	commercial		Bogotá
1960	Pardo Restrepo Santamaria building	commercial		Bogotá?
1960	Caja Agraria warehouse	industry		ND
1961	second place in national contest for Agrarian bank building	financial		Barranquilla
1961	Marymount School	educational		Bogotá
1961	Building of flats	house		Bogotá
1961	Alfonso Mejia Navarro house	house		Cartagena, Castillogrande
1962	Colombian insurance company building	commercial		Bogotá 2?
1962	Styron plant Bechtel corporation Dow chemical	industry		Cartagena
1963	Eduardo Angel house	house		Cartagena, Castillogrande
1964	House owner?	house		Bogotá
1966	Building of flats	house		Bogotá
1968	Nemqueteba building	commercial		Bogotá
1969	Hernán Echevarría house	house		Cartagena, Castillogrande
1969	Cafe at soda plant	house		ND
1973	Colinsa houses	house		ND
1956/1 957	Bogota Bank	financial		Cartagena
1963/1 965	Bavaria Buildings Bachue and Bochica at International centre	commercial		Bogotá
ND	Mrs Naranjo de Mejia House	house		Barranquilla
ND	Marco Tulio Amaris house	house		Barranquilla, Pradomar
ND	Miguel Correa House	house		Barranquilla, Pradomar
ND	Alvaro Lopez house	house		Bogotá

• Synthesis

total 137	111 housing	81%	392.52	barranquilla> 15
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1940s >15	6 commercial	4%		Bogotá> 94
1950s> 105	6 social	4%		Cartagena> 16
1960s> 12	3 industry	2%		Others>8
1970s> 1	3 finance	2%		ND>4
ND> 4	2 institutional	1%		
	2 hospitals	1%		
1953- 1957>71	1 hotel	1%		
	1 sports	1%		
	1 theatre	1%		
	1 education	1%		
		100%		
	Before 1955 mostly suburbia houses			
	After 1955 more diverse, still strong private housing			

3. Substantial quotes in Spanish

Th Ch- Sec	Text	File	pdf pg	Book pg
1.4	<i>Colombia reclamaba eso: un Gobierno que afirmara las bases de la nacionalidad, y que se proyectara hacia lo lejos en la historia. Personero de los deseos más auténticos de Bolívar y decidido a llevar hasta el final su labor de reintegración colombiana, este Gobierno ha iniciado su vida en medio de la espontánea alegría de los colombianos. Por ello, de movimiento militar, el del 13 de junio, se convirtió en movimiento nacional.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953. ELT</i>		43
1.4	<i>Consolidado gloriosamente, con el amparo de la Divina Providencia, el movimiento cristiano nacionalista del 13 de junio, me dirijo a vosotros con gratitud y con afecto en nombre de la Patria, invocando la protección de Dios y la excelcitud de nuestros próceres, hoy 20 de julio, aniversario de nuestra Independencia.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953. ELT</i>		111
1.4	<i>El conservatismo, que es mayoría en esta corporación, tiene en sus programas y en sus tradiciones normas fecundas para llevar a término una racional y patriótica reforma de aquellos aspectos que las exigencias de la vida moderna soliciten con imperio; en las doctrinas de la Iglesia Católica tiene el manantial inagotable de la verdad, que no perece; en el pensamiento de Bolívar, fanal que no se extingue en el señalamiento de sus derroteros ideológicos; y habrán de ser ellos lo que lleven a vuestra inteligencia la luz que necesita para encontrar las formulas que garanticen en fecunda armonía las exigencias del orden con los atributos de la libertad, lema de nuestro escudo, y las demandas de la justicia en el orden social y económica con los imperativos del progreso en todo linaje de actividades.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953</i>	13	14
1.4	<i>Palabras de Su Excelencia, pronunciadas el 17 de junio de 1955, en el atrio del Voto Nacional, para consagrar a Colombia al Corazón de Jesús. Sagrado Corazón de Jesús: En este día, destinado a honrar el misterio de vuestro amor hacia los hombres, como Presidente de Colombia y en nombre de su católico pueblo vengo a renovar la consagración oficial de la República y a reconocer que sois Señor y dueño de los individuos y de las familias, fuente primera de la autoridad y fin último al que deben ir dirigidas nuestras acciones y palabras.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1955</i>		220
1.4	<i>Bolívar, Genio Continental: Ambiciosa empresa suya de crear una Sociedad de las Naciones de América para asegurar la unidad moral e intelectual del Continente. Esta concepción grandiosa tuvo inevitables resistencia en ciertos caudillos insulares, quienes pretendían que el propósito de establecer un Tribunal de Justicia para las cuestiones americanas era una imitación sutil y peligrosa del Consejo Anfictiónico de la antigua Grecia. Realizado el sueño de Bolívar, no hubiéramos tenido que llevar nuestros litigios a otros Continentes, donde no se comprenden nuestros problemas étnicos, geográficos y políticos.</i>	<i>6 Meses de Gobierno</i>	56	
1.4	<i>Mostrar objetivamente a todos los que quieran ver dentro y fuera de nuestras frontera la nueva realidad colombiana, a través las muchas cosas pequeñas, medianas y grandes que se han sucedido entre nosotros y por todas las cuales asoma el alma popular, desenvolviéndose como un largo rollo para enseñarnos su verdadera cara de grandeza, sus esperanzas, sus virtudes y sus arrestos impetuosos de pueblo altivo y soberano, es el objetivo de esta publicación. En riguroso orden cronológico aparecen nuestros relatos gráficos reflejando los aspectos más sencillos pero</i>	<i>Colombia en Marcha</i>	3	

	<i>trascendentales de la formidable evolución espiritual y material sufrida por Colombia en un año de gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas.</i>			
1.4	<i>"Paz, Justicia, Libertad". Bajo este lema que abrió para Colombia horizontes de claridad y de esperanza, se inició el nuevo ciclo histórico de la vida de una nación que sentía temblar los cimientos de su estructura, asentada, paradójicamente, sobre el inmovible granito de los Andes. Tres palabras de insigne alcuria, reemplazaron los alaridos de las Euménides sueltas. Hoy, limando asperezas, restañando heridas y deshaciendo entuertos, el Gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas reconstruye, con un sentido de humanitarismo cristiano, la ruinas morales y materiales de un país que estuvo en guerra consigo mismo u con los más elementales principios de la civilización</i>	<i>Colombia en marcha</i>	17	
1.4	<i>Un gobierno de todos y para todos Al presentar mi saludo a las clases trabajadoras en el día escogido para celebrar mundialmente la Fiesta del Trabajo, quiero que se analice serenamente la obra social del Gobierno y se diga si en el funcionamiento del binomio Pueblo-Fuerzas Armadas, las autoridades en general, y los militares en particular, no hemos cumplido fielmente hasta hoy los compromisos adquiridos desde el 13 de Junio, demostrando que el Gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas ha sido, es y continuará siendo "un Gobierno del pueblo, para el pueblo y por el pueblo".</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1955</i>		137
1.4	<i>Como un día los pueblos del Mediterráneo, los pueblos del Caribe tienen un destino común en el cual nuestra posición geográfica nos señala como fiel de balanza en el progreso y armonía de América.</i>	<i>6 Meses de Gobierno</i>	45	67
1.4	<i>Homenaje de la Sociedad Bolivariana de Colombia Palabras del señor Presidente, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, en la comida ofrecida por la Sociedad Bolivariana de Colombia, en honor del mismo, de su esposa Doña Carola y su hija María Eugenia Rojas de Moreno Díaz, el 24 de Julio de 1956. Colombia siempre responde afirmativamente en sus compromisos internacionales y especialmente, en estos compromisos del continente americano, responde con palabras y responde con hechos; al defender fuera de estas fronteras continentales, los principios de solidaridad mundial y respeto, por la civilización cristiana y por los principios de la verdadera democracia, Colombia, con los Estados Unidos, fueron las únicas repúblicas, que enviaron tropas a luchar en Corea;</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1956</i>		349-350
1.4	<i>Envío un saludo emocionado en estos históricos instantes a las valientes tropas colombianas que luchan en Corea al lado de las Naciones Unidas</i>	<i>Colombia en Marcha</i>	5	
1.4	<i>Los derechos de la mujer: Capítulo al que ya nada puede agregarse en la controversia de la ideas es el derecho para la mujer de elegir y ser elegida. Colombia –país esencialmente católico- no puede continuar negando a quienes forman el alma de sus hogares ese sagrado derecho, emanación de la misma personalidad y presea de la civilización cristiana.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1954</i>	19	149
1.4	<i>Solidaridad americana En un mundo siempre conturbado por el espectro de la guerra, América demuestra con hechos que es el Continente de las soluciones pacíficas y de la esperanza. La solidaridad americana, felizmente expresada en el arreglo colombo-peruano, es hoy más necesaria que nunca, ante los inmensos peligros que amenazan a la civilización cristiana con el tumultuoso avance del comunismo.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1954</i>		173
1.4	<i>El Gobierno seguirá impulsando el plan de obras públicas</i>	<i>6 Meses de</i>	57	

	<i>que se adelanta con la colaboración del Banco Internacional; el ferrocarril del río Magdalena, la Siderúrgica Nacional de Paz de Río, las centrales hidroeléctricas, la nueva refinería de petróleos, las viviendas para empleados y obreros.</i>	Gobierno		
1.4	<i>Un sol de Paz, Justicia y Libertad alumbra para todos los colombianos en este nuevo amanecer, superada la etapa de barbarie que nos desprestigió ante el mundo civilizado; unidos en fraternal abrazo podremos realizar ya las grandes y nobles tareas que nos guarda el destino; nadie nos detendrá en este camino de patrióticas aspiraciones, porque las espadas que nos legaron los forjadores de nuestra nacionalidad, dignificadas aún más por la razón que da el derecho, vencerán cuanto se oponga a la benéfica unión del pueblo y de las Fuerzas Armadas, y nos sacarán triunfantes en la nueva batalla que estamos librando por la salvación de Colombia.</i>	6 Meses de Gobierno	163	190
1.4	<i>La inauguración de cerca de dos millares de obras en los burgos colombianos es una confirmación más de que algo ha cambiado en el país. Ahora no hay campo a engaños. El pueblo entero tiene ante sí las realizaciones nacidas de la buena voluntad y de la inteligencia del Presidente Rojas Pinilla. Las palabras dichas no bastarán para convencer a las gentes independientes sobre beneficio alguno, si los éxitos no tuvieran realidad. El régimen presenta un saldo que el país puede apreciar. A la voluntad organizadora de la vida colombiana, a la política seguida, a las ideas conductoras de este Gobierno bolivariano, nacionalista y católico, se unen las realizaciones materiales. Ya no hay solamente promesas. Ya existe la manera de hacer un balance. El pueblo lo está haciendo, y su júbilo y su participación son una carta de crédito y el más codiciado y valioso testimonio de eficacia y honestidad.</i>	Un país que trabaja	5	
1.4	<i>A los ciudadanos de Barranquilla feb 04, 1956. Me es grato sobre manera, hablar desde este sitio tan propicio a las nobles evocaciones, desde aquí contemplo, la magnífica avenida que pregon a los ambiciosos proyectos urbanísticos de Barranquilla, [...] en el propósito de alcanzar el destino que nos corresponde como pueblo libre y digno de una venturosa prosperidad. Oyendo al señor Gobernador del departamento, al señor alcalde de la ciudad, y comprobando el unánime apoyo que las masas obreras y campesinas, le han dado a su representante, se comprende como carecen de lisonja y como son ciertas sus palabras, cuando hablan del férvido respaldo, que el pueblo del Caribe da al gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas. El país no puede gravitar exclusivamente, sobre una cualquiera de sus comarcas, su progreso tiene que ser uniforme, equilibrado y metódico, el gobierno atiende por igual las necesidades, que este concepto impone en la tarea administrativa por esto Barranquilla con las obras que se adelantan, Santa Marta con su nuevo puerto y el terminal del Ferrocarril del Atlántico, Cartagena con su refinería, su dique seco y otras grandes obras navales, y Montería el más grande imperio agrícola y ganadero del país que el gobierno apoya y fomenta, constituyen el magnífico cuadrilátero económico y demográfico, sobre el cual descansará por muchísimos años, el venturoso porvenir del Norte Colombiano.</i>	Discursos 1956 ELT		46
1.5	<i>Colombia y Venezuela tienen una misión conjunta como adalides del panamericanismo. Por encima de todo, tenemos que preservar la solidaridad y defensa del hemisferio, haciendo del nuestro el continente de la libertad contra la amenaza mundial del comunismo.</i>	6 Meses de Gobierno	45	

1.5	<i>Frente anticomunista</i> <i>El mundo acaba de asistir con angustia al avance victorioso del comunismo en la Indochina francesa. Sin la colaboración de la China Roja y de la Rusia Soviética, este problema se hubiera resuelto satisfactoriamente hace varios años. Todo lo que abandonen las naciones libres en Asia, caerá en la órbita de Moscú. Ni Corea ni Indochina son problemas locales del Continente milenario, sino problemas mundiales. Lo que olvidan los comunistas es que la batalla de Asia se puede convertir en la guerra de los Continentes. América no puede ser indiferente al colosal conflicto del mundo moderno.</i>	ELT		173 70
1.5	<i>Solidaridad Americana</i> <i>Discurso para condecorar a los negociadores colombianos del caso Haya de la Torre, 13 de mayo de 1954.</i> <i>En un mundo siempre conturbado por el espectro de la guerra, América demuestra con hechos que es el Continente de las soluciones pacíficas y de la esperanza. La solidaridad americana, felizmente expresada en el arreglo colombo-peruano, es hoy más necesaria que nunca, ante los inmensos peligros que amenazan a la civilización cristiana con el tumultuoso avance del comunismo.</i>	ELT		172
1.5	<i>Alocución al país con motivo del primer aniversario del Gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas. 13 de junio de 1954.</i> BIENHECHORAS CONSECUENCIAS <i>la impiedad y el comunismo internacional</i>	<i>Discursos</i> <i>Rojas Pinilla</i> <i>1954</i>		228
1.5	<i>Asamblea Nacional Constituyente. Discurso pronunciado al instalar la ANAC.. 27 de julio de 1954. Frente a la revolución internacional</i> <i>... La hora actual es la del combate definitivo entre el cristianismo y el comunismo. Nosotros en América ocupamos una posición de grave responsabilidad, por nuestra formación espiritual, por nuestro destino histórico y por nuestros compromisos con la Republicas amigas. Por otra parte, hemos tenido que sufrir en varias ocasiones los impactos de siniestros atentaos de típica inspiración marxista. Se impone, pues, que vosotros adoptéis ahora una fórmula para declarar contrarias a la Constitución las colectividades políticas que, como el comunismo, obedecen consignas de países que persiguen la destrucción de Colombia.</i> <i>... Una sociedad que no cuida de su base fundamental, que es el pueblo, está no solo injustamente edificada, sino expuesta a los peores peligros. El comunismo ha prosperado en el mundo, porque la civilización occidental olvidó que el sustento era el cristianismo y concluyó abrazándose locamente al materialismo capitalista.</i>	<i>Discursos</i> <i>Rojas Pinilla</i> <i>1954</i>		387 148- 155
1.6	<i>Camilo José Cela: Lucharía Colombia en defensa de Europa si la Naciones Unidas así se lo pidiese?</i> <i>RP: Colombia estaría dispuesta a luchar en los campos de Europa en defensa de los principios de la civilización cristiana contra la invasión del comunismo ateo y bárbaro.</i>	<i>Discursos</i> <i>Rojas Pinilla</i> <i>1953</i>	28	27
3.1	EL SENTIDO DEL MOVIMIENTO <i>Discurso pronunciado por el excelentísimo señor presidente, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla el 4 de julio, ante la manifestación obrera</i> NI DEMAGOGIA NI CÁLCULOS MALSANOS: <i>Inmodificable será mi decisión de calmar las angustias del obrero y del campesino, y responder con obras a los anhelos de paz, efectiva protección y justicia social.</i>	53a		72
3.1	<i>Departamento por departamento, obras inauguradas el 13 de Junio de 1954.</i>	<i>Un país que</i> <i>trabaja</i>	12- 281	21- 330
3.1	<i>Aún el más escéptico de los colombianos dejaría de ser sincero si no reconociera que el país entra al año de 1955 bajo los signos más favorables que haya tenido en mucho tiempo. Paz, economía sólida, estabilidad de los negocios</i>	<i>Una Política</i> <i>de Obras</i> <i>Públicas</i>	8	17

	<i>existentes, estímulo para nuevos negocios, incremento considerable en todo orden de producción, amplias y favorables ofertas de crédito en el exterior y sobre todo una fe decidida y valerosa en nuestro propio esfuerzo y en las posibilidades del país.</i>			
3.2	<i>Resumen de las obras que se inauguran hoy, 13 de junio de 1954: Total 1.422</i>	<i>Un país que trabaja</i>	279	332
3.2	<i>El 13 de junio no es una simple transformación política, sino una revolución moral que le devolvió a la Nación su alterada fisonomía y la encauzo de nuevo en el rumbo histórico que había perdido. Esta fecha no marca una ruptura de la legalidad, sino un regreso al espíritu mismo de la ley, por eso la opinión, sin distingos de clases o partidos, reconoce que la presencia de la Fuerzas Armadas en el Poder significa la inmediata restauración de los derechos públicos y privados, en toda su plenitud y eficacia.</i>	<i>6 Meses de Gobierno</i>	60	
3.2	<i>A partir del 13 de Junio, fecha estelar para los buenos hijos de la patria que son los más y los mejores, para la república amaneció un nuevo día. El país encontró nuevamente su tradicional derrotero republicano y democrático, y con entusiasmo y convicción sin precedentes, va afirmando los pilares esenciales de la nacionalidad a través de un repertorio de empresas de colosales proyecciones históricas, que bajo el estratégico comando de las Fuerzas Armadas por medio de su más preclaro exponente, el Excelentísimo Señor Presidente, Teniente General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, aceleradamente se están plasmando en realidades tangibles.</i>	<i>Colombia en Marcha</i>	3	
4.1	<i>Homenaje de la Sociedad Bolivariana de Colombia Y en segundo lugar, tenía que pensar en La Paz, en la unidad nacional; esa unidad nacional, que todos los países del mundo buscan, porque en ella se funda la seguridad de la soberanía y de la libertad de un pueblo. Los colombianos y todos los suramericanos, para hablar solamente de este continente, somos, pudiéramos decir ciertamente, nacionalistas, puede que en algunas ocasiones lo exageremos, pero todos tenemos que comprender que en esa exageración, con ideas nacionalistas, es la que mantiene la unidad del pueblo, es la que mantiene la unidad de América y es la que garantiza la solidaridad.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1956</i>		346
3.2	<i>La radio debe agregar a sus programas comerciales, programas culturales, para que las gentes de todas las clases sociales puedan recibir beneficios espirituales de ese admirable medio informativo. Así mismo, el cine, el teatro y la prensa deben ensanchar los conocimientos del pueblo. En el afán de hacer fácil para todas las fuentes del saber, el Gobierno está adelantando los estudios, prospectaciones y contratos indispensables para introducir en el país la televisión. Si en otros países, hasta el presente, este formidable medio de transmisión sólo se ha empleado para la propaganda comercial, nosotros lo dedicaremos preferentemente a los fines de cultura. Periódicos fuente conocimiento</i>	<i>6 Meses de Gobierno</i>	126	171
3.2	<i>Piedrahita – construcción del CAN: Pero Bogotá es una ciudad desorganizada, incómoda y fea en el concierto de las ciudades suramericanas y no hay lógica alguna para seguir atándola a situaciones que pretenden ser tradicionales y no valen como tradición. En la ciudad es necesario seleccionar, preservar y dignificar lo que tiene valor histórico, sentimental o arquitectónico, para dejar que el resto de la ciudad se abra paso, capte el progreso y se ponga a tono con la evolución de los tiempos.</i>	<i>Ministerio de Obras Públicas</i>	11	37
3.2	<i>Y finalmente muchas personas que no conocen el proyecto del Centro Administrativo ni el Plan Piloto de los urbanistas extranjeros, han defendido ésta para atacar el primero y</i>	<i>Una Política de Obras Públicas</i>	23	44

	<i>ahora no van a poder conciliar sus razonamiento ni explicar su encendido fervor histórico, muy loable por cierto y que yo comparto con sinceridad, cuando sepan que el Plan Piloto proyectaba derribar varias edificaciones históricas, entre ellas el Palacio de la Carrera, para levantar unas moles que irían a presentar una oprobiosa desproporción en ese ambiente y que sólo encuadraría dentro de la gigantesca sombra de Manhattan, en la ciudad de New York.</i>			
3.3	<i>Y en tercer lugar, porque en este año se reincorporará a las actividades oficiales la ingeniería nacional. Esta reincorporación se hará a base de capacidad profesional, de responsabilidad exigida y de escrupulosa honestidad en la relaciones con el Ministerio de Obras Pública</i>	<i>Una Política de Obras Públicas</i>	9	18
3.4	<i>Inauguración obras primer año El 13 de Junio significa el regreso de la República a sus mejores tradiciones y creencias, el cuidado por todas las regiones colombiana, la ayuda económica a los campesino, el respeto y la tutela sobre bienes y vidas de todos los habitantes, la defensa de la fe tradicional, atención militar a nuestras fronteras nacionales, la inviolabilidad de la soberanía, el trabajo para todos, la igualdad de los hijos todos de la patria ante la ley y las autoridades. Por eso, esta fiesta aniversaria es una fiesta de todos los colombianos.</i>	<i>Un país que trabaja</i>	8	18
3.5	<i>"No son ofrecimientos demagógicos ni cálculos malsanos los que me llevan a seguir en contacto permanente con el pueblo con el cual he permanecido en fraternal unión durante mi vida militar y a través de los soldados que llegan de los campos, y de las ciudades a los cuarteles, y que son el símbolo perfecto de las masas trabajadoras. Orgulloso recuerdo en estos momentos que el dinero necesario para terminar mi carrera de Ingeniero Civil lo gané en los Estados Unidos, trabajando materialmente, como cualquier obrero, en la fábrica Ford, ocho horas diarias, con el mismo fatigante esfuerzo que hacéis vosotros en el trabajo diario. Al estrechar mi mano podéis sentir aún las asperezas que dejaron en ella las máquinas y herramientas del taller. Inmodificable será mi decisión de calmar las angustias del obrero y del campesino, y responder con obras a los anhelos de paz, efectiva protección y justicia social</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953</i>	44	43
3.5	<i>Cualquier demagogia en estos aspectos sería controlada en forma inmediata para evitarle mayores necesidades y angustias a la clase media, al campesino y al obrero.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953</i>		403
3.6	<i>La misión principal de las Fuerzas Armadas en el Poder ha sido devolver la paz a la Nación; la tarea que ahora sigue es crear la concordia y restablecer el imperio de la Constitución y de la ley. Al abrir esta palestra republicana el Gobierno aspira a que sus debates estén inspirados en la severidad del raciocinio, que se oigan en calma todas las opiniones, que se discutan tranquilamente los principios, para que de la exposición de las ideas contrapuestas salgan triunfantes la razón y la verdad. Aspiro a que los partidos olviden sus odios tradicionales, a que cesen las recriminaciones y a que nadie vuelva a remover el dolor de lo pasado.</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1954</i>	8	144
3.6	<i>Con la ayuda de la Divina Providencia, cuya protección en ninguna circunstancia dejaré de implorar, os aseguro, para tranquilidad de la República y garantía de la libertad dentro del orden, que cada día será más firme y significativo el binomio nacional del pueblo y de las Fuerzas Armadas.</i>	<i>6 Meses de Gobierno</i>	199	213
3.6	<i>Progreso General y Uniforme. Para mí, como Presidente de todos los colombianos tengo como un axioma que el progreso de la Nación debe ser total y armónico. Mi corazón de Mandatario se siente orgulloso de esta empresa gigante (Siderúrgica Paz de Río) que tanto representa en el</i>	<i>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1954</i>	86	208

	<p>oriente colombiano, pero con la misma satisfacción y entusiasmo estoy tomando iguales medidas para la realización, en el Occidente de una obra paralela a Paz de Río por su magnitud y significado, con la cual, al desarrollar integralmente la hoya del valle del Cauca, se beneficia a los Departamento del Cauca, Valle, Caldas y Antioquia, y se produce la alimentación necesaria para impulsar hasta el máximo la industrialización de zonas tanto del Oriente como del Occidente.</p>			
4.1	<p>COMPROMISO INTERNACIONAL DE SEGURIDAD Homenaje al Secretario de Estado de USA, 8 de octubre de 1954. IMPORTANCIA DE LA COOPERACION. ... por medio de organismos interamericanos que tienen funciones y poderes claramente definidos, que por mayoría de votos toma sus decisiones para coordinar los esfuerzos del Hemisferio encaminados a repeler cualquier clase de agresiones o de amenazas de agresión, así como a resolver todos los conflictos y todas las situaciones que pongan en peligro la soberanía, la independencia, la integridad territorial o la inviolabilidad de las fronteras de cualquier país americano...</p>	<p>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1954</p>	76	
4.1	<p>Entrevista con Visión, corresponsal Guillermo Payán - Colombia Respira Cuál es la idea central de su gobierno en materia de política internacional? RP Colombia respetará los tratados internacionales suscritos y tratará de estrechar sus vínculos con el país que actualmente rige los destinos del mundo occidental, Estados Unidos, y con las naciones hermanas, de la América.</p>			
4.1	<p>Colombia y Chile Palabras de agradecimiento del señor presidente al recibir la medalla militar del ejército de Chile, 3 de diciembre 1953 El Deber de América: Los pueblos de América tienen el deber de unirse... a través de sus ejércitos... y porque están llamados a un destino común, como son comunes sus gestas libertadoras y sus magistrales empresas.</p>	6 meses	251	
4.1	<p>Acción Popular. La enseñanza campesina Discurso pronunciado en la Caja de Crédito Agrario, el 23 de julio ... para que nuestros núcleos rurales que constituyen no sólo la inmensa mayoría de los pobladores colombianos, sino la porción más necesitada de la ayuda común, más dignos, por sus prendas y sacrificios, del apoyo del Estado, reciban en su plenitud los dones de la educación.</p>	6 meses de gobierno		
4.1	<p>Discurso del Señor Presidente Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, ante la manifestación popular de Cartagena, el 11 de noviembre 1953 Renacimiento colectivo desde el robustecimiento de una política social que mejore las condiciones de vida de nuestros trabajadores urbanos y rurales, y evite el peligro de la lucha de clases, hasta la multiplicación de las viviendas como fórmula eficaz de fortalecer el núcleo familiar y darles a los grupos menos favorecidos un claro sentido de su dignidad de hombres y de ciudadanos; desde la adopción de planes racionales en las obras públicas, hasta la defensa de nuestros productos agrícolas, sin olvidar reformas fundamentales que depuren la justicia, combatan la impunidad y aseguren el escrupuloso manejo de los fondos del Estado.</p>	<p>Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953</p>		531-532
4.1	<p>EQUIDAD PARA ZONAS RURALES Discurso pronunciado en la Plaza de Bolívar de Bogotá ante la manifestación cívica de ganaderos y agricultores, el 31 de agosto -1953 ...Cuanto hagamos en materia de ayuda financiera y</p>	6 meses de gobierno		

	<i>técnica por la agricultura y la ganadería, transformará a ese hombre, por la acción de la equidad, en el mejor y más adecuado instrumento de producción y de trabajo. Nada podemos recoger de los esclavos y mucho podemos esperar de los hombres libres.</i>			
	<i>En términos globales podría decirse que el Movimiento Moderno en Colombia, ahora identificado como arquitectura oficial del "establecimiento" siguió in recorrido similar al que tuvo en otras partes del mundo: lejos del purismo esencialista de los años 40, fue derivando en un formalismo gratuito que si bien produjo en ocasiones ejemplos estéticamente elaborados, mostraba ya signos evidentes de agotamiento conceptual. Se empezaron a sentir entonces los ataques dirigidos a los distintos flancos.</i>	Arango 1989		235
4.1	<i>La Patria, que no es únicamente un retazo de tierra delimitado por fronteras convenidas y pactadas a través de los siglos, sino que comprende, esencialmente, a toda una porción humana ligada por los lazos invisibles de sus creencias, de su idiosincrasia, de sus tradiciones y de sus creación, se exterioriza generalmente en las obras ornamentales y arquitectónicas que plasmaron sus emociones y tendencias.</i>	Colombia en marcha	115	
4.1	<i>Amamos el pasado y lo respetamos con toda la fuerza de nuestra alma, pero no podemos vivir como se vivía en el pasado.</i>	Ministerio de Obras Públicas	11	37
4.1	<i>El crédito para la vivienda de interés social, debe ser tan bajo como lo resistan las instituciones de ahorro y las entidades prestatarias y la ayuda asignada por el Gobierno debe aplicarse a la creación de facilidades comunales y a cubrir los saldos en rojo que produce la vivienda campesina. En el campo, sigue siendo mi creencia inmodificable, está la fuerza y la permanencia de este país.</i>	Una Política de Obras Públicas	8	16
4.1	<i>Discurso pronunciado por el Señor Presidente Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, ante la gran manifestación popular de Pasto, el 17 de octubre 1953</i> <i>El transporte aéreo es una de las más importantes necesidades para el intercambio comercial y mejor vinculación y conocimiento entre los habitantes de dos diferentes Departamentos. Con un territorio tan extenso y de topografía tan diversa como el colombiano, que requiere ingentes sumas del Presupuesto para la conservación, ampliación y construcción de las vías terrestres, el medio más económico y efectivo para resolver el trascendental problema de los transportes, es un plan ambicioso de aeropuertos que cubra todo el territorio y, según sus categorías, vaya formando y enlazando convenientemente las líneas municipales con las departamentales y éstas con las nacionales, para incorporar las más importantes al tráfico aéreo internacional.</i>	Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953		440-441
4.1	<i>Desde las reliquias prehistóricas hasta nuestros días, Colombia presenta a los ojos de los entendidos una rica variedad de motivos de todo orden que sucesivas generaciones fueron dejando como testimonio de su existencia y como prolongación de sus concepciones sobre la religión, sobre la vida, sobre todos los problemas del ser humano.</i>	Colombia en marcha	115	
4.1	<i>Entre todas las capitales suramericanas y de Centroamérica, Bogotá es la que posee mayor posibilidad de ensanche económico y racional. En la inmensa y extraordinariamente bella Sabana de Bogotá, podría vivir holgadamente la población total de Colombia. En cambio, hoy tenemos una ciudad que con solo 650 mil habitantes, tiene una longitud que se acerca a 16 kilómetros y en muchos puntos su anchura no pasa de 2 ½ kilómetros. Quien sostenga que una ciudad lineal de estas proporciones</i>	Una Política de Obras Públicas	22	43

	<i>es el ideal urbanístico, puede estar tratando de hacer un mal chiste, pero está solamente demostrando una ignorancia culposa en estas material de simple y elemental observación</i>			
4.1	<i>Descripción General del Proyecto (El Dorado): La construcción del aeropuerto se ha proyectado en dos etapas, con dos pistas paralelas, de 3.800 metros y 3.600 de largo, respectivamente, provistas de sus calles de rodaje y áreas de estacionamiento de aeronaves. Los edificios para pasajeros, carga, mantenimiento, hangares y demás facilidades para atender el tráfico aéreo, están localizadas entre las dos pistas. En la actualidad el Gobierno de las Fuerzas Armadas está llevando a cabo la construcción de la primera etapa, que contempla una pista de aterrizaje de 3.800 metros de longitud por 300 de anchos, con una faja pavimentada de 60 metros de ancho. Paralela a la pista de aterrizaje se ha proyectado una pista de carreteo de 30 metros de ancho y 3.800 metros de longitud. Se han proyectado también las áreas de parqueo de las aeronaves y los edificios para pasajeros, carga, movimiento, hangares para atender las necesidades presente y las que se presentarán en un futuro próximo.</i>	Ministerio de Obras Públicas	18	68
4.1	<i>El entonces Director del Departamento Nacional de Aeronáutica Civil, Teniente Coronel Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, hizo un estudio comparativo de los dos proyectos y presentó un informe al Ministro de Guerra, que concluye así, después de analizar el aspecto técnico, el margen de seguridad de dicho terreno sobre las inundaciones, la posibilidad y facilidad de los drenajes, la geología del suelo y del subsuelo, la adquisición de terrenos, el costo de construcción, las vías de acceso a la capital, la facilidad para una comunicación directa con Bogotá sin utilizar la vías existentes, etc. "por las consideraciones anteriores, el Departamento de Aeronáutica Civil conceptúa que el aeropuerto nacional de Bogotá debe construirse en los terrenos escogidos sobre la margen izquierda del río Bogotá en el triángulo Fontibón-Engativá-Puente Grande. Este concepto que contempla fuera del aspecto técnico, los intereses presente y futuro de nuestra capital, podrá ser sostenido por el Gobierno desde todo punto de vista y defendido fácilmente desde todos sus aspectos"</i>	Una Política de Obras Públicas	44	63
4.2	<i>A los desafiantes rascacielos u obras suntuosas, este Gobierno prefiere la multiplicación de la pequeña y mediana propiedad, los servicios públicos indispensables para los novecientos pueblos y aldeas del país, y los beneficios de la asistencia social para los necesitados de los campos y ciudades.</i>	Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953	40	38
4.2	<i>Nuestro movimiento nacional está en la obligación de levantar una juventud robusta y ambiciosa de grandes destinos, capaz de emprender una tarea de proyecciones históricas.</i>	Colombia en marcha	175	
4.2	<i>Será merecedor de todo apoyo y estímulo por parte del Estado el capital que prospecta, crea y ejecuta empresas productivas, que arriesga ahorros que son fruto del mismo trabajo; que compromete la técnica de los expertos y la habilidad y consagración de los obreros, para producir bienes esenciales, y que al pagar salarios adecuados, contribuye positivamente a la tarea de elevar el nivel de vida de las clases menos favorecidas.</i>	6 Meses de Gobierno	16	19
4.3	<i>"La multiplicidad de aeropuertos desarrollará convenientemente la aviación de turismo, que constituye la base fundamental de la defensa nacional". No son muchos los países que, como Colombia, puedan ofrecer al viajero tantísimas y tan bellas oportunidades. Desde las heladas cumbres de El Ruíz y de la Sierra</i>	Colombia en marcha	90	

	<p>Nevada, hasta las ardientes vegas del Magdalena y las calcinantes llanuras del Tolima nuestra geografía, como un mapa-mundi en miniatura, encierra entre dos océanos y un río-mar (el Amazonas) perspectivas y paisajes imponderables.</p> <p>También brinda nuestra tierra a la curiosidad de etnólogos, paleontólogos, historiadores y hombre de ciencia en general, un río venero de tradiciones y monumentos. N este crisol de razas y de costumbres, apreciarán quienes nos visiten los fermentos vitales y en gestación de un pueblo en trance de alumbramiento.</p>			
4.4	<p>La nación colombiana avanza aceleradamente hacia un futuro mejor. Los moldes de lo que teníamos hace unos pocos años, ya aparecen pequeños e insuficientes y la solución de los problemas tal como veníamos contemplándola nos parece hoy anacrónica y a veces ilógica y absurda.</p> <p>Hay que entrar, pues, con un criterio más amplio, más lógico, más técnico y más moderno, a estudiar la nación colombiana de hoy, con sus problemas de expansión, de desarrollo industrial, de crecimiento demográfico y de mejoramiento en el estándar de vida que se traduce en aumento de producción, porque la gente consume cada vez más y cada vez mejor, lo cual a veces exige un mejoramiento radicar en los transportes. La civilización actual es función de los transportes en último análisis.</p>	Una Política de Obras Públicas		25
1.6	<p>A cerca de España: "Creo que el problema común que más nos pueda afectar es la defensa contra el comunismo, que amenaza los valores de la civilización cristiana, y, de un modo especial, los de la hispanidad". Entrevista con Camilo José Cela, Julio 27, 1958</p>	Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953?	28	27
4.1	<p>PROGRESO PARA TODOS: Propósito de esta Administración es realizar una ambiciosa obra de progreso, con el fin de desarrollar hasta el máximo los recursos naturales del país, de aprovechar las condiciones económicas que se presenten y de llenar todo espacio de vida vacío.</p>	6 Meses de Gobierno	57	
7.3	<p>Seguramente, nunca en la historia del país, un movimiento renovador, un gobierno, una esperanza nueva, habían producido un consentimiento tan unánime y una participación tan completa de todos los colombianos. Esta iniciativa aldeana y para las aldeas es una demostración de que el país entero está en pie y tal vez –por primera vez– puede decirse que exista en él el Estado, no ya concebido como mera organización burocrática, estrictos cuadros administrativos que suministren estadísticas, certificados y expidan resoluciones, sino con el significado que al vocablo daba el pensador Alemán: "Estado es el 'estar en forma' de una unidad popular dirigida y plasmada desde el poder".</p>	Un país que trabaja	7	16
7.3	<p>Esa compenetración que no ha sido obra del azar sino que tiene sus raíces naturales en la aplicación sincera de las promesas oficiales, en el grado superlativo como el Teniente general Gustavo Rojas Pinilla ha sabido interpretar y solucionar los clamores reivindicativos de su pueblo.</p>	Colombia en Marcha	3	
7.3	<p>Con fecha 11 de febrero, la Dirección de Información y Propaganda del Estado envió a los alcaldes del país una circular en la cual se pidió a los de aquellos poblados que no habían iniciado obra alguna espontáneamente, la construcción de alguna de utilidad general. La circular de esta oficina dice: "La Dirección de Información y Propaganda del Estado repite con entera claridad que el Gobierno no exige de usted y de esa población gastos excesivos, ni siquiera abundantes, mucho menos superiores a las posibilidades del municipio; la obra, que se</p>	Un país que trabaja	7	17

	<p>llamará '13 de Junio'... debe hacerse consultando las posibilidades del tesoro municipal, sin exigir a la ciudadanía ninguna cuota o contribución extraordinaria (subrayado en el original) con ese fin. Mal podría convertirse una fecha tan amable para los colombianos, como del 13 de Junio, en un motivo de sacrificios económicos o de nuevos impuestos. Esa fue la participación de la "DIPE". Consistió en dar forma a una mística que, como siempre, es nacida de los sentimientos y deseos profundos de las gentes, no de ninguna presión estatal o política, porque de esta manera, cuantas obras se deseara inaugurar no tendrían valor alguno, y no pasarían a ser armazones materiales de asfalto, cemento o piedra, sin interioridad ni sentido alguno, y que bien podrían llevarse a cabo al impulso de las meras necesidades materiales, cuando el pueblo o aldea se viera precisado a construirlos. Un noventa y cinco por ciento de los poblados de Colombia está adelantando su obra, construyendo, en el ámbito nacional, el monumento –calle, hospital, carretera, puesto de salud, casa municipal, "casa campesina", puente- que simbolice el sentido del 13 de Junio: eficacia y realismo, sentido constructivo y amable dentro de la energía necesaria en la actualidad política de este país, como en la de todos los del mundo</p>			
7.3	<p>Barranquilla, que es el primer puerto fluvial y marítimo del país y la llave maestra de nuestra economía, necesita conservar su merecida fama de ciudad industrial, mejorando modernamente sus instalaciones u actuales medios de producción fabril. Cuando esté terminada la reorganización y seguridad de su Aduana, el Gobierno creará, como necesidad de inaplazable urgencia, una zona franca que asegure su mayor desarrollo e incremente otras industrias.</p> <p>El río Magdalena es y seguirá siendo la gran arteria de nuestro progreso, y para el mantenimiento adecuado de este medio maravilloso de transporte, el Gobierno no olvidará lo que significan en la economía nacional sus propios problemas y los de sus moradores.</p> <p>Dentro de los planes de inmediata realización para incrementar el desarrollo industrial y general de este Departamento, están la gran hidroeléctrica de la Sierra Nevada y la construcción de la Carretera a Santa Marta. Con relación a Barranquilla, conviene destacar el interés del Gobierno a través del Instituto de Crédito Territorial, para resolverle el problema de sus viviendas, especialmente el de la zona negra, que se hace palpable en una inversión total en terrenos y construcciones de once millones de pesos. Además, acaba de expedirse el decreto que autoriza al Alcalde de Barranquilla para contratar un empréstito de \$4.500.000 con destino a la ampliación del acueducto.</p>	6 Meses de Gobierno	159	
7.3	<p>La idea de darle a la capital de la República una bella y moderna calzada, como la tienen las grandes capitales americanas y europeas, es conveniente para su embellecimiento e importancia, pero la manera como fue realizada le quitó su bondad y la hizo ingrata. ¿Cómo pueden justificarse las horas extras que se pagaron en su construcción, con el único objeto de inaugurar un trayecto sin finalidades comerciales o turísticas, y que ni siquiera beneficia a los propietarios de zona, que las tienen que pagar con el impuesto de valorización? ¿Por qué no se adelantó con planos y presupuestos aprobados, y a un ritmo de trabajo correspondiente a su ninguna urgencia, construyendo primero las vías laterales, para que quienes pagan la valorización puedan beneficiarse de su dinero?</p>	Discursos Rojas Pinilla 1953		244
7.4	<p>Unas palabras dichas por el Presidente Rojas Pinilla en la noche del 13 de junio de 1953 lograron plasmar ese movimiento, encauzar estos sentimientos para una larga</p>	Un país que trabaja	7	

	<i>labor histórica, dar a las gentes sensación de que la tierra que pisa es suya y de que vivir no es motivo para que otra gente las persiga para arrebatarles la vida. Algún periódico decía, uno o dos días después del 13 de Junio: "Colombia sabe otra vez a patria". La patria ha sido reconquistada, y el Estado ha comenzado a tener existencia.</i>			
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